



**Perth Academy
School Handbook
Academic Session 2025/2026**



Education and Learning
Improving Lives Together
Ambition | Compassion | Integrity



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1. Introduction

Welcome

Welcome to Perth Academy. Our learning community welcomes young people to join our vision to be Together, Engaged, Achieving and Motivated, TEAM Perth Academy. We want to provide all learners with opportunities to succeed and to learn as part of a vibrant learning community where skilled and caring staff challenge and support learners to achieve their best, relationships are at the heart of our school.

We hold to our unique tradition and reputation as one of the oldest secondary schools in Scotland but we also strive to innovate and develop to ensure we are a modern learning community that meets the needs of the young people and the wider community we serve.

This handbook has been developed to communicate information about our school, how it operates and provide a welcome for parents in preparation for your child attending our school. This handbook can also act as a reference tool while your child is attending Perth Academy to develop parental partnership in supporting your children in their learning and achievement.

History

Perth Academy is thought to be the oldest school in Scotland, its origins can be traced to a Grammar School established in Perth in the twelfth century by the Benedictine monks of Dunfermline Abbey. Since then, it has steadily absorbed other institutions in the city, including amalgamation in 1915 with Sharp's Institution and in 1932 the school left its famous building in Rose Terrace to move to the present site at Viewlands.

Until 1971 the school was a selective senior secondary school, serving a huge catchment area stretching from Dunkeld to Kinross, and from Errol to Methven, well over five hundred square miles in area.

In 1971 the Academy became a comprehensive school serving all pupils within a smaller catchment area. Since then, it has successfully maintained its fine academic and extra-curricular traditions in addition to refining and extending considerably the range of courses offered.

Accommodation

Our accommodation is a mixture of old and relatively new. The current building has been on this site for 90 years. The school has benefitted gradually over time from additional buildings and an all-weather pitch was added in 2014. The school is currently undergoing a rolling refurbishment programme of a range of classrooms and areas across the school.

We share our campus with Viewlands Primary School and Fairview Special School which provides excellent facilities for pupils 3 – 18 years with complex learning needs.

2. Delineated Area

The school's catchment area falls into three parts: -

- The western areas of the city served by Viewlands, Letham and Goodlyburn Primary Schools.

- The areas to the north-east of the city, served by Robert Douglas Memorial School at Scone, and Balbeggie, Collace, Burrelton and Guildtown Schools.

A number of pupils from other areas also attend, admitted on placing requests.

School roll: 1012 (November 2024)

3. Contact Details

PERTH ACADEMY
Murray Place
Perth
PH1 1NJ

Tel: (01738) 458000

E-mail: perthacademy@pkc.gov.uk

Website: www.perthacademy.org.uk

HEADTEACHER

Ms Eleanor Paul

DEPUTE HEAD TEACHERS

Mrs Gail Murray (School Improvement)
Mr David Taylor (School Improvement)
Mr Tom Mawhirt (Support for Pupils)
Mrs Diane Morton (School Improvement)

BUSINESS MANAGER

Mrs Carole Leishman

PRINCIPAL TEACHERS

Biology/Physics
Business Education
Chemistry
Computing Science
English
Social Subjects
Home Economics
Modern Languages
Support for Learning (SfL)
Mathematics
Music & Drama
Physical Education
Religious & Moral Education
Craft & Design Technology
Art & Design

School improvement & Curriculum

Mr A Strachan
Mr C Malcolm
Ms J Tarbet
Ms J Montgomery
Mr G McVicar
Mrs S Brailsford
Mrs R Mann
Mr T Mallet
Mr M O’Gorman
Mr C Oliphant
Mr C Scrimgeour
Mrs F Davidson
Mrs K Gillies-Nicol
Mr F Giove
Ms H Simpson

The staff Team consists of:

91 teaching staff

16 Pupil Support Assistants

18 single status staff

93 in total

There are 6 janitors and approximately 20 cleaning staff and dining hall staff who are part of our team but are employed by Tayside Contracts.

PARENT COUNCIL

Chair: Mrs Rebecca Mackay

Vice Chair: Mc Callum Alsmeyer

The Parent Council can be contacted via school email – pcperthacademy@gmail.com

Parental Communication

We strive to ensure parents are aware of what is going on in the school and consider it to be essential that there is a regular exchange of information between home and school. The Perth Academy Communications Policy can be found on our school website.

If the school becomes aware of concerns, parents will be contacted. Likewise, parents are asked to contact the school over any concern. The first point of contact in the school for a parent is the Principal Teacher of Guidance who can take forward any issues arising.

A fortnightly parent/carer update is published in the form of a Microsoft Sway. This refers to all meetings activities, highlights and achievements to keep parents/carers fully informed. There are regular additional updates in the form of sways or letters which are issued via groupcall email.

Written school reports are issued 3 times per year, per student and one parents' evening per year group takes place over the course of the year with the exception of S1 who have 2 parent contact sessions.

We welcome feedback on our reporting processes. Should you wish to discuss any aspect of your child's report, this can be done at the respective parent contact evening or by contacting your child's Principal Teacher of Guidance. Each year group will have a formal parents' consultation evening when parents can talk to subject teachers about progress. However, if parents/carers have any concern about a young person of an academic nature or a wellbeing issue they should not hesitate to contact the school at any time. Parents/Carers are encouraged to contact the school office perthacademy@pkc.gov.uk if your enquiry relates to a specific subject, your email will be passed to the Principal Teacher of that subject, who will respond. Parents can also email the guidance staff directly. A reminder that all staff have many commitments during the school day and often after school.

The Guidance system is co-ordinated by the Depute Head Teacher (Support), Mr Mawhirt, Guidance teams currently (Nov 2024) are as follows:

| HOUSE | GUIDANCE TEAM | EMAIL |
|---------------|--|--|
| ATHOLL | Mrs K Dow Mrs Gillian Arnott / Mrs E Rodger | kedow@pkc.gov.uk earodger@pkc.gov.uk garnott@pkc.gov.uk |
| <i>BIRNAM</i> | Mr S O'Donnell Mr J McKenna | sodonnell@pkc.gov.uk jmckenna@pkc.gov.uk |
| CLUNIE | Ms. E. Muldoon Mrs J Honeyman | emuldoon@pkc.gov.uk jhoneyman@pkc.gov.uk |

Parents should feel free to communicate with the school at any time but should be aware that because of teaching commitments and other duties it is not always possible to respond the same day.

Annually we review the progress of the school and plan improvements. Details of these are, of course, published to parents.

Depute Head Teachers

Depute Head Teachers have specific remits and responsibilities including Houses for which they have overall pastoral responsibility.

| HOUSE | DHT |
|--------------|--------------|
| Atholl | Ms D Morton |
| Birnam | Mr T Mawhirt |
| Clunie | Mrs G Murray |

Attendance and Punctuality

If your child is not registered during their Home Room class at the start of the day, we will send out a Groupcall text message to parents.

In the event of an absence, parents are asked to telephone the school's absence line **(458050)** before 9am with information. The absence line allows relevant information to be recorded for the school on voicemail.

If the reason for absence is not given in this way, the school will use groupcall to request an explanation for absence and to check the young person is safe.

It is expected that parents will respond to let the school know why their child is not in school or if they think their child is in school. If unexplained or unauthorised absences become an issue, interventions will be made to ensure a young person is safe and supported to attending school. For full information on attendance please see the PKC website at the following link <http://www.pkc.gov.uk/article/17427/Attendance>

For short absences, e.g., doctor's appointments, the appointment card is sufficient. This should be taken to the school office first thing in the morning of the appointment.

Pupils are expected to be punctual in the morning and after break and lunch. If there is a pattern of latecoming, pupils may be asked to attend a lunchtime reflection to discuss this further.

If a parent requires to take a pupil away from school during term time in special circumstances, e.g., for a holiday, notification must be made in writing to the Head Teacher. It should be noted that the school does not grant permission for this type of absence and this will be marked on pupil records as 'unauthorised absence'. This practice is strongly discouraged to prevent gaps in a young person's learning. Details of local authority policy are found in Section 2 of this document.

Complaints procedure

We would always want parents to raise a concern/complaint at school level to allow us an opportunity to resolve this before complaining to the Council. As part of Perth & Kinross Council, Perth Academy is committed to providing a high-quality service. We value complaints and use information from them to help us improve this service.

A leaflet outlining our complaints procedure is on our website and can be found by clicking the link below:

https://www.pkc.gov.uk/media/48109/Perth-and-Kinross-Council-Complaints-leaflet-2021/pdf/Complaints_Leaflet_2021.pdf?m=637545178589570000

We aim to resolve complaints quickly. Should you make a formal complaint you will receive our decision at Stage One in five working days or less unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If we can't resolve your complaint at this stage, we will explain why and tell you what you can do next. We might suggest that you take your complaint to stage two. You may choose to do this immediately or sometime after you get our initial decision.

Stage Two of the complaint's procedure involves a detailed investigation undertaken by an officer from beyond the school. At this stage, Perth & Kinross Council will respond to the complaint as soon as possible and within 20 working days. If our investigation is going to take longer than 20 working days, you will be informed.

Revised time limits if required will be agreed with you and you will be kept updated on the progress of the complaint.

Admission to the School

Pupils residing within the school's area can be enrolled at any stage without delay provided space is available and no complex planning is required. Parents of pupils from outwith the catchment area, who would like their children to attend Perth Academy should first arrange to visit the school and then complete a placing request application:

<https://www.pkc.gov.uk/article/17301/Placing-request>

Any parent is welcome to make an appointment to see the appropriate (Depute Head Teacher) to discuss admission:

| | |
|-------|---------------|
| S1-S2 | Mr T Mawhirt |
| S3-S4 | Mrs. D Morton |
| S5-S6 | Mrs G Murray |

Email Communications

Email is the primary method of communication with parents and carers. This allows us to convey important information such as planned parent information evenings, School and Parent Council events and school newsletters expediently.

For parents/carers who do not wish to receive information via email or who do not have an email address, hard copies of documents emailed will be made available on the school website and when appropriate, will be sent home with your child.

Please note that this method of communication will not replace Groupcall text messaging which is used to notify you of emergency information, for example pupil absences or emergency school closures (see below). In accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, email addresses will only be used by the school for administrative purposes and will not be shared with any other organisation or agency.

Groupcall – Text messaging service and email

To improve communication between school and parents we use the Groupcall messaging service. This system is of great benefit to the school and allows us to send parents a text message. Parents who do not have a mobile phone will receive an automated voice message on their home phone. The system is used in a number of ways:

Send messages when seeking information from parents e.g. reasons for pupil absence.

Send messages to inform parents e.g. forthcoming events, pupil arriving late at school, bad weather closures.

Send messages when we need to contact a lot of parents quickly.

This system can also be used by groups on trips, so you could hear that all is well and the party has arrived safely as well as informing any urgent situations which may occur.

The school acknowledges there may be occasions when Groupcall texts querying attendance are sent in error when pupils are actually in school/class. It is understood this can cause worry for parents and ask for understanding from parents on these rare occasions as the system usually works very well.

Information Sheet

The school produces a weekly communication for pupils and staff called the "Information Sheet" which is published every Monday during term time. This communication has details of all activities that go on in and around school (everything from school trips, discos, events, after school clubs, assemblies, and dress down days). The Information Sheet is read out to all pupils during their Home Room class by the teacher who takes each class. In it is updated on our school's website weekly. At the start of the year, we encourage all pupils to ensure that they to check the information sheet regularly and suggest that they inform their parents/carers about it.

Perth Academy News

We have a News Team of students led by a teacher from the English Department who produce a fortnightly report on current news and issues. These video news bulletins are shared in Home Room. We always want to hear about the good news and achievement of our pupils outwith school. Please send items of interest to perthacademy@pkc.gov.uk labelled celebrating success so that we can publicise and share in your child's achievements.

Website & X

To improve communication with parents and the wider community we have a website www.perthacademy.org.uk . This new website is under construction and development. We try to provide details of help to pupils and parents on our website from daily information to that which is longer lasting. If there is anything you would like to know that you cannot find on the website, please do not hesitate to contact the school office.

We are constantly striving to update the information there to try to ensure the partnership with parents is developed and maintained. We encourage parental feedback on the range and quality of information contained on this site.

Our X feeds are a useful source of information and news. Keep up to date with everything going on at Perth Academy by following our various X accounts.

@perthacademy
The school's official X Account

@pacademynews
Twitter of the Perth Academy News Team

@perthacademype
Account for keeping up with all PE updates

@PerthAcMusDram
Music and Drama feed

@PAGeography
Perth Academy Geography Dept

@PAMemorial
Twitter of Perth Academy Remembers

@academy_physics
Perth Academy Physics Department

@DETPerth
Design and Technology department

@perthacadhist
History department

@modern_perth
Modern Languages

@BusEd_PA
Perth Academy Business Dept

@PerthAcademyHE
Home Economics Dept

4. School Vision, Values and Ethos



Our vision is to be TEAM Perth Academy. Together, Engaged, Achieving and Motivated. Our values are Respect, Integrity, Safety and Equity (RISE). We place a great deal of importance on individual contribution to the team, the development attributes of good team players and encourage all young people and staff to do their part for the collective good of the our school, Team Perth Academy.

This is our vision for all members of the community, learners, staff, parents and partners and:

As a Team, we will RISE.

Perth Academy has a chaplaincy team and an active partnership with Perth Baptist Church and Letham, St Mark's, Church of Scotland.

5. Parental Involvement

There are opportunities provided for a parent to become involved in the school and to supporting learning at home. We are committed to improving home-school partnerships and parent representation.

<https://www.pkc.gov.uk/parentalinvolvement>

We aim to involve parents as partners in supporting their child's learning. Support and advice is given to learners through regular one to one learning conversations with their teachers and reporting on progress is shared with parents at key stages, particularly when curriculum choices are being made.

We gather parent opinion in a number of ways. We hold focus groups, and we survey parents regularly, with a view to gathering opinion and consult to encouraging the sharing of views. We run a range of information evenings over the year focused on specific aspects of school activity to ensure parents feel informed and engaged. A few departments have hosted family learning events which have been very well received and promoted learning in those subjects.

Once a year in May/June, we run an in-depth questionnaire, similar to that used in school inspections with parents to establish opinions on our practice as part of our self-evaluation procedures.

Parent Council

The Parent Council can be contacted via the school office or via email pcperthacademy@gmail.com . The Chair is Mrs Rebecca Mackay.

Parents, carers and family members are by far the most important influences on children's lives. Between the ages of 5 and 16 children spend only 15% of their time in school, research shows that when parents are involved in their child's learning, children do better at school and throughout life.

Because parents have such a vital role to play in their children's education, the Scottish Parliament has passed a law called the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 – to encourage and support more parents to become involved.

To help achieve these aims, all parents will automatically be members of the Parent body at their child's school and will be entitled to have a say in what happens at the school.

What does a member of the parent body mean?

As a member you can expect to:

Receive information about what your child is learning.

Receive information about events and activities at the school.

Receive advice/help on how you can support your child's learning.

Be told about opportunities to be involved in the school.

Have a say in selecting a Parent Council to work on behalf of all parents at your school.

What is a Parent Council?

Perth Academy Parent Council is very parent-friendly – it's a great opportunity to become more involved but also to meet other parents and keep informed.

The aims of the Parent Council constitution are:

- Supporting and challenging the school in its work with pupils in its vision to be TEAM Perth Academy unperpinned by its values of Respect, Integrity, Safety and Equity.
- Representing the views of all parents.
- Encourage and foster links between the school, parents, pupils and the wider community.
- Report back to all the parents in the school.
- Play a role in the appointment of the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team.
- Support the school and pupils during school inspections.

You can view the full constitution of the Perth Academy Parent Council on their area of the school website.

6. Transitions

Pupils Entering School in S1

Most of our pupils join us in August of their S1 and we make every effort to ensure that their transition is as smooth and positive as possible. We have an extensive programme of transition activities to support pupils as they move from Primary 7 to Secondary 1.

Principal Teachers of Guidance and Support, Community Link Workers, the Headteacher, Depute Head Teacher with responsibility for transition, along with groups of pupils visit our associated primary schools to speak with prospective P7 pupils about secondary school the transition experience.

All P7 pupils undertake a range of transition activities including after school activities afternoon (run by the PE department and Active Schools staff), visits to the Home Economics department for a baking session, events run by other departments are a regular feature and a 2 day visit in June is arranged where pupils follow their future timetable in their S1 new classes. These events give them a chance to meet their new peers and increase familiarity with their new school environment.

A number of other departments visit and work collaboratively with Primary Schools to offer taster sessions and curriculum delivery.

Pupils and parents are given an opportunity to visit Perth Academy to meet members of staff and pupils at our annual P7 Parent Open Evening which usually takes place in May.

In constructing new S1 classes we attempt to ensure that every pupil has at least one of their former classmates or someone they know in their new classes, P7 teachers support this process by recommending groupings of young people and the voice of young people is also considered.

Pupils receive their timetable when they visit Perth Academy for the two days induction in June. On these days, pupils have the chance to get to know each other and take part in a variety of activities in their new class groups. Senior pupils provide daily support and navigation through our highly successful Buddy system during the two-day transition visit and for the first week or two of the new term in August.

Enhanced Transition

Arrangements to support pupils with additional support needs to make successful transitions are a well-established part of the transition process and this begins early in the year before the move to secondary. Transition Children and Young People's planning meetings, reports from primary schools and professional dialogue between Principal Teachers of Support and Guidance help to provide detailed knowledge about individual pupils for the successful transition to S1. Some pupils require an enhanced transition and adaptations to the S1 timetable to ensure a well-supported transition. This is done in full consultation with the primary school staff, parents, community link workers and other agencies as appropriate.

Pupils enrolling in the School at other times or stages

Parents who wish to visit the school and/or to enrol their child are asked to arrange an enrolment meeting with the relevant Depute Head Teacher. S1/S2 Mr Mawhirt, S3/S4 Mrs Morton, S5/S6 Mrs Murray. We wish to meet with both parents and the young person at least once before they are enrolled at Perth Academy. This meeting will help to decide the classes and courses most suitable for the pupil and provide parents/carers with an opportunity to explore general school procedures and any requirements for additional support. Sometimes, depending on additional support needs or personal circumstances there may be a requirement for a transition meeting to be arranged prior to the move of school. If you wish to enrol your child at Perth Academy, please contact the school office to arrange an appointment.

Positive Destinations: Transition beyond school

A range of supports are available to support pupils as they move on from secondary school, whether to further education, vocational training, university, employment or the voluntary sector. Guidance and/or ASN staff work alongside the extensive Careers and Employability team to support pupils in planning the next steps for them as they move on to a positive destination. A very active and involved Careers Adviser from Skills Development Scotland is an integral part of the 16+ activities in school, is available for individual appointments for pupils and is part of the school's Integrated Support Team. Parents are naturally involved in this process and are also welcome to meet with the Careers Advisor in school, with their child if requested.

7. Curriculum

Curriculum and Organisations of Courses

The Curriculum for Excellence (<https://education.gov.scot/curriculum-for-excellence/>) is Scotland's national curricular model.

At Perth Academy, our 'why' and our purpose directly links to this and our curriculum aims to provide opportunities to enable our pupils to achieve their full potential, both as learners and individuals. Our overall objective (our why) is for our pupils to become:

- confident individuals
- effective contributors

- successful learners
- responsible citizens

Our approach ensures the focus is on the needs of the young person and draws on learning partnerships with parents and other providers.

In this we expect learning and teaching to be characterised by:

- engaging and active lessons
- setting challenging goals
- shared expectations and standards
- timely, accurate feedback
- sharing learning intentions, success criteria
- collaborative learning
- resources and planning reflecting the differing needs of pupils

All the above requires quality personal support to allow high levels of achievement.

Our curriculum is divided into two broad phases: Broad General Education and Senior Phase.

Comprehensive information about Curriculum for Excellence at a national level and information about how to support your child's learning at home, can be found at the Parentzone website: <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone>

Broad General Education S1 – S3

Pupils follow a timetable of study which allows for continuity and progression from Primary 7 and which enables them to have a wide range of experiences and outcomes across the 8 curricular areas shown below:

- Languages & Literacy (English and Modern Languages)
- Expressive Arts (Art, Drama and Music)
- Health & Wellbeing (PE, Personal and Social Education and Home Economics)
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- Religious and Moral Education
- Sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics and STEM science, technology, maths and engineering)
- Social Subjects (Geography, History, Modern Studies and Citizenship/Sustainability)
- Technologies (Business Education, Computing and Craft, Design and Technology)

Learning is organised around experiences and outcomes and benchmarks. These are divided into different levels that broadly reflect different stages of learning. Most pupils in the Broad General Education (BGE) will be working within 3rd and 4th level. Classes are mainly mixed ability with subject specialists providing differentiated materials and support to cater

for individual needs and abilities. Support staff assists subject specialists in many classrooms. In S2, some subjects are set by ability. Almost all pupils learn French and Spanish in S1 with a few opting for Gaelic. Pupils experience taster courses in Spanish and Gaelic in S2 and can opt to study these languages in greater depth from S3 onwards. At the end of S2, pupils are given the opportunity to personalise their curriculum by choosing 9 subjects from within the curriculum areas listed above, including English and Maths which are compulsory for all pupils. This allows them to do what they enjoy and what they are good at while still experiencing a broad general education. In S3, pupils review their subject choices and select the 7 subjects (including English and Maths) they wish to study in depth in S4. Students receive curricular guidance through our Personal Social and Educational programme and through targeted interviews as appropriate. Parent Information evenings are held to guide parents through the subject choice process and to explain the different pathways available to pupils. In addition, pupils in S1 and S2 spend two periods per week on a chosen elective when they develop skills for learning, life and work in an area of particular interest to them. Pupils choose from an extensive range of options. In S3, this is reduced to one period.

The Senior Phase S4 to S6

In the Senior Phase, our curriculum aims to offer our pupils, relevant, appropriate and attractive choices to continue their learning. We aim to provide courses and experiences which will give our pupils the best possible chances of securing long term employment or entering further or higher education.

For S4 pupils, there are three different levels of course within the National Qualifications framework – National 3, National 4, National 5 and level 5 National Progression Awards (NPAs). There are also courses at National 1 and 2 which are offered in exceptional circumstances such as for young people with significant additional support needs. In S5 and S6, we offer courses at Higher, Level 6 NPA and at Advanced Higher levels. We have a curricular partnership with the other Perth City Secondary Schools and UHI Perth which provides an array of additional opportunities study at other schools and the College.

To progress to a course at Higher level, pupils would normally need to have secured a pass in the subject at National 5. Similarly, to progress to Advanced Higher, a pass at Higher is required. Greater detail on the content of courses as well as the suggested entry requirements can be found in the course choice information on our website or via discussion with the Departmental Principal Teacher.

Pupils in S5 are required to select 5 subjects, S6 pupils must take 4 subjects unless studying three level 7 courses. S6 pupils have the opportunity to enhance their learning through planned opportunities we call development periods this includes activities such as work experience, voluntary work within our beyond the school, and peer support for example, paired reading or Mentors for the Prevention of Violence Some of these opportunities are accredited such as Saltire Awards for volunteering, Duke of Edinburgh Award, Sports Leaders Award, Personal Development Award and Youth Achievement Awards.

National Courses Awarded by the SQA

| LEVEL | ASSESSMENT |
|-----------------|--|
| National 3 | No examination – assessed internally in school |
| National 4 | No examination – assessed internally in school |
| National 5 | Most subjects assessed in school and by external examination |
| New Higher | Assessed in school and by external examination |
| Advanced Higher | Assessed in school and by external examination |

Information about the examination system, past papers and other useful help and advice for students and parents can be found on the SQA website: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/41292.html

Guidance and support staff assist pupils in gathering information about potential careers and in making the transition to employment or further and higher education. A significant amount of time is spent in PSE in the senior phase on providing guidance on writing effective personal statements to support applications to universities, colleges and the world of work.

Perth City Campus

Together with the three other Perth city schools and Perth College we are part of Perth City Campus. This offers mainly S6 pupils the opportunity to take a wider range of subjects than would normally be available within Perth Academy and also allows courses to run which would not otherwise be viable. Pupils travel between schools (as appropriate) to attend classes in selected subjects and return to their base school once the teaching period is over. Perth College offers an extensive range of courses which help prepare pupils for the workplace as well as for further and higher education. The City Campus also offers pupils the opportunity to meet with a wider cohort of pupils and to share ideas, contacts and experiences.

Literacy, Numeracy, Health and Wellbeing

All practitioners have responsibilities to develop core skills of literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing across learning. All teachers at Perth Academy are working together to ensure a consistent approach to the development of literacy, numeracy and health and well-being.

These three areas are of key importance to our pupils' development and underpin all aspects of learning. In Curriculum for Excellence, it is the responsibility of all teachers to contribute to the development of these three areas in their teaching, irrespective of the subject they are delivering.

What is meant by literacy?

In defining literacy for the 21st century we must consider the changing forms of language which our children and young people will experience and use. Accordingly, our definition takes account of factors such as the speed with which information is shared and the ways it is shared. The breadth of our definition is intended to 'future proof' it. Within *Curriculum for Excellence*, therefore, literacy is defined as:

the set of skills which allows an individual to engage fully in society and in learning, through the different forms of language, and the range of texts, which society values and finds useful.

The literacy experiences and outcomes promote the development of skills in using language, particularly those that are used regularly by everyone in their everyday lives. These include the ability to apply knowledge about language. They reflect the need for young people to be able to communicate effectively both face-to-face and in writing through an increasing range of media. They take account of national and international research and of other skills frameworks. They recognise the importance of listening and talking and of effective collaborative working in the development of thinking and in learning.

In particular, the experiences and outcomes address the important skills of critical literacy. Children and young people not only need to be able to read for information: they also need to be able to work out what trust they should place on the information and to identify when and how people are aiming to persuade or influence them.

What does it mean to be numerate?

Being numerate helps us to function responsibly in everyday life and contribute effectively to society. It increases our opportunities within the world of work and establishes foundations which can be built upon through lifelong learning. Numeracy is not only a subset of mathematics; it is also a life skill which permeates and supports all areas of learning, allowing young people access to the wider curriculum.

We are numerate if we have developed:

The confidence and competence in using number which will allow individuals to solve problems, analyse information and make informed decisions based on calculations.

A numerate person will have acquired and developed fundamental skills and be able to carry out number processes but, beyond this, being numerate also allows us to access and interpret information, identify possibilities, weigh up different options and decide on which option is most appropriate.

Numeracy is a skill for life, learning and work. Having well-developed numeracy skills allows young people to be more confident in social settings and enhances enjoyment in a large number of leisure activities. For these and many other reasons, all teachers have important parts to play in enhancing the numeracy skills of all children and young people.

Numerate people rely on the accumulation of knowledge, concepts and skills they have developed, and continually revisit and add to these. All practitioners, as they make use of the statements of experiences and outcomes to plan learning, will ensure that the numeracy skills developed from early levels and beyond are revisited and refreshed throughout schooling and into lifelong learning.

What do we mean by health and wellbeing?

Our curriculum at all levels has a strong focus on health and well-being and promoting healthy lifestyles. This includes developing positive attitudes, encouraging resilience and showing respect and care for oneself as well as others. Within our Personal & Social Education programme, in particular, Guidance staff work hard to ensure that pupils make responsible and healthy choices.

Learning in health and wellbeing ensures that children and young people develop the knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes which they need for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing now and in the future. Learning through health and wellbeing enables children and young people to:

- make informed decisions in order to improve their mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing
- experience challenge and enjoyment
- experience positive aspects of healthy living and activity for themselves
- apply their mental, emotional, social and physical skills to pursue a healthy lifestyle
- make a successful move to the next stage of education or work
- establish a pattern of health and wellbeing which will be sustained into adult life, and which will help to promote the health and wellbeing of the next generation of Scottish children

Our focus on learning within Health & Wellbeing aims to promote the physical, social and emotional well-being of pupils. Active consideration is accordingly given to all aspects of school life which influence "healthy living".

Health and Wellbeing issues can appear in any school subject, principally in Biology, Religious and Moral Education, Physical Education, Home Economics, Science and Personal Social Education. It is within the last of these that factual knowledge is complemented by activities designed to develop responsible attitudes and to help pupils make correct choices of lifestyle.

Among key health issues are friendship, alcohol and substance misuse, smoking, traffic education and more particularly in middle and senior school, sexuality, mental health and positive relationships education. These are taught primarily by specialist guidance teachers using carefully prepared teaching materials with the broad aim of preparing pupils for an effective, confident and responsible adult life.

The School Nurse is available by appointment through the Principal Teacher of Guidance Teacher where pupils can talk privately to the School Nurse about health issues.

Skills for Learning, Life and Work

All departments help learners to develop skills for learning, life and work within the expectations of the Career Education Standard (<https://education.gov.scot/media/0nffvlwr/dyw2-career-education-standard-0915.pdf>). Our curriculum and skills framework is being reviewed in session 2024/25 to incorporate greater opportunities for the development of skills and to further develop our curricular pathways for all learners.

Pupil Equity Fund (PEF)

Pupil Equity Funding is being allocated directly to schools from Scottish Government and is targeted at closing the poverty related attainment gap.

Every council area is benefitting from Pupil Equity Funding and 95% of schools in Scotland have been allocated funding for pupils in P1-S3 known to be eligible for free school meals.

This funding is to be spent at the discretion of Headteachers working in partnership with each other and their local authority. Schools will now have their plans in place for using their funding and will be implementing those plans.

Pupil Equity Funding is being provided as part of the £750m Attainment Scotland Fund which will be invested over the current Parliamentary term to tackle the poverty related attainment gap.

Perth Academy is delivering pupil equity through a wide range of targeted approaches. The major interventions being funded through the Pupil Equity Fund in 2022/23 include improved approaches to targeted inclusion, attendance and family engagement and staffing for our Breakfast Club.

Extra-Curricular Activities- Learning Beyond the Classroom

Learning at school is not just about subjects in classrooms. The school benefits from a well-appointed outdoor classroom which is used creatively by many curricular areas. At various times throughout the school year, pupils take part in a variety of excursions, field trips and study visits; sometimes a small charge is made to cover the cost of transport and/or admission. This provides opportunities for pupils to apply their learning to real life contexts. Annual parental consent will be sought for local trips. Specific parental consent will be sought for trips outwith the immediate area or involving an overnight stay.

In addition to this, a range of educational, residential and international trips are often available to all year groups:

Examples of these are listed below:

- S1 Day trip to Willowgate Activity Centre
- S1 cinema trip
- S1 French trip to Lille
- S1 pantomime trip
- S2 trip to Dynamic Earth, Edinburgh
- S2/3 Battlefields trip to France
- S3/4 Hockey Tour to Ayr
- S3/4 London trip (organised by the English Department)
- Various relevant curricular trips take place each year for example the drama team regularly arranges theatre trips to help young people to experience a range of plays and productions.
- Ski trip
- World Challenge Expeditions every 2 years, previous destinations, India, Peru, Bolivia.

The school offers a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities, sporting, recreational and cultural, which we see as an important element in educational provision.

Our fifteen acres of playing fields are used by rugby and hockey teams of all ages, and the games hall makes possible a wide variety of indoor sporting activities. Many pupils every year participate in Duke of Edinburgh's Award programmes at bronze, silver and gold levels.

Music is an essential educational experience, both in performance and appreciation, and in addition to class teaching and instrumental instruction, a range of musical interests are catered for at lunchtime and after school. As well as an accomplished school orchestra, there are a string orchestra, wind band, brass band, a ceilidh band, and smaller instrumental and vocal groups. The school plays an active part in the musical life of Perth, being prominent in the central musical groups, and we participate fully in the Perth Festival of the Arts, the Competitive Festival, and on numerous occasions in the local community. There is a Christmas Concert every Christmas in St John's Kirk in addition to other musical and drama productions for both senior and junior pupils.

Careers Advice: Skills Development Scotland

All pupils discuss their career plans with Guidance staff at various points and at course choice times in S2, S3, S4 and S5. In PSE, classes look at a range of career pathways and develop the skills and qualities required for employment and Further/Higher Education, writing personal statements, C.V.s, UCAS and College applications, etc. Any pupil who may have difficulty in accessing a positive 16+ destination will receive additional support from their Principal Teacher of Guidance and the careers advisers. In some cases, transition programmes may be put in place to target young people at risk of not gaining a positive post-school destination. The school is measured both on initial and sustained destinations for leavers and we strive to develop our curriculum to make it relevant to the local labour market information as well as further and high education pathways.

The careers adviser is in school several times per week and individual appointments can be made with her. Parents/Carers are welcome to attend with their child. Increasingly, we are working in conjunction with other agencies to give financial advice to all our young people. This is also done by the mathematics department and as part of our PSE programme.

For further information regarding careers you can contact Skills Development Scotland, via their website at: www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk

Religious/Moral Education

Religious and Moral Education endeavours to:

Allow pupils to investigate questions concerning the nature and the meaning of life and to investigate some of the answers offered by the six major religions of the world.

Help pupils to develop their own beliefs, attitudes, moral values and practices through the process of personal search, discovery and critical evaluation.

Our staff includes two teachers of Religious Education, and each pupil has a period of this subject each week. The school is non-denominational, and the purpose of Religious and Moral Education is not to advocate a religious viewpoint, but rather to stimulate an informed understanding of a variety of religions. We want young people to be informed and develop an understanding of the rights of others to held differing views. We live in a multi-cultural world and so a wide understanding of religious perceptions helps prepare pupils for the world of today. Religious Studies courses are also available as options, leading to National Qualifications and Higher.

Assemblies are planned to include time for reflection and opportunities for spiritual development. These are currently conducted in partnership with the School Chaplains, the Rev J Stewart, and Rev G Mackay, our Chaplaincy Team.

Homework

Homework is an important aspect of secondary education, though the amount necessarily varies according to the subject and level of study. It will be issued to pupils at all stages in the school. Responsible habits of private study should be encouraged, as homework plays an increasingly important part later in the school when pupils gradually assume personal responsibility for organising private study and completing extended essay and project work.

Homework can be issued for many purposes, such as to:

1. Reinforce work already tackled in class by giving extra practice.
2. Provide extended, more demanding challenges for abler pupils.
3. Prepare the ground for study to be undertaken later.
4. Ensure that work not finished in class time can be completed.
5. Carry out reading/learning tasks for which there is not time in school.
6. Assist the teacher in building up an overall picture of a pupil's skills and knowledge so that appropriate assistance can be given with specific difficulties.
7. In the later stages, practical exercises, projects, dissertations, etc. must be completed at home and will be used in assessments.
8. Consolidate revision of previous work.
9. Establish good personal study habits.

Microsoft Teams for homework

The vast majority of homework activities are set and accessed via Microsoft Teams in GLOW which is the national schools intranet.

If specific work is not set, then pupils are expected to revise their notes and read further; they should not neglect reading and consolidating learning just because nothing formal has been set.

Parents will make a very valuable contribution to their children's progress if they give all the help and encouragement, ensuring homework is done thoroughly and regularly. If parents are concerned about any aspect of homework they should contact their child's Principal Teacher of Guidance. As part of our school website development we plan to make course outlines and topics visible to parents as this has been requested through parental feedback.

Presentation Arrangements for SQA Examinations

All pupils in S5 are required to maintain a full timetable throughout S5. Subject choices should be made from the options available. S5 pupils are not permitted to drop subjects during the course of the session.

Pupils in S6 are not permitted to have more than one free column unless special arrangements for this are made with for example if a pupil is sitting 3 Advanced Highers. S6 students are encouraged to access wider opportunities from within their free column e.g. to engage in volunteering or work experience.

Presentation levels for SQA examinations are decided by teaching staff in discussion with learners, based on prior learning and progress and may be subject to change to suit the needs and abilities of pupils. Parents will receive up to date information about presentation levels and can expect communication regarding any changes.

Pupils who are entitled to it, are granted study leave from school during the SQA examinations. This is to give them the best possible opportunity to plan and carry through an individualised programme of study. Guidance will be given on the best use of this time. There will also be provision of study facilities in school at these times if desired, and teachers will be available for consultation. Pupils may be asked by teachers to attend for extra classes in some subjects during examination leave. Some staff provide Supported Study sessions. It should be noted that this is done on a voluntary basis by staff.

Some pupils receive Additional Arrangements for examinations. The need for these identified by staff and is evidence based in each specific subject. If you have any queries about this please contact the support for learning department.

8. Assessment & Reporting

Pupils' academic performance and progress is tracked electronically. Tracking and action plan reports are completed by staff on the tracking and monitoring module within the electronic information system, SEEMIS.

S1 receive 2 tracking reports per session

S2 receive 2 tracking reports per session, one includes action plan comments.

S3 receive 3 reports per session. There are two tracking reports and one action plan report.

The reports contain the following information:

Tracking Report – Ratings for Behaviour/Effort/Homework and current 'Stage' in their progression within a Level

Action Plan Report – Same information as the Tracking Report plus short Action Plan Comments

In the Senior Phase (S4-S6), pupils again receive 3 reports per session giving updates on Behaviour/Effort/Homework and also detailing pupil Target Grades and current Working Grades based on progress. Two of these reports are Tracking Reports and one is an Action Plan Report.

All year groups receive one parent contact per session with S1 having a 2nd one later in the session.

9. Support for Pupils

The Support for Learning department at Perth Academy aims to assess pupil needs, create, implement, monitor and evaluate support programmes to meet these needs and work collaboratively with departmental staff to share this information, advise on resources and involve parents/carers in the process of planning to meet needs.

Mr Mawhirt (Depute Head Teacher, Support) maintains strategic leadership of all aspects of pupil support. She also chairs the Support Management Team and Integrated Team Meetings (ITM), which directly focuses the combined energies of school-based and external partners to support pupils. The Integrated Team Meeting takes place monthly and manages the extent of external involvement from Educational Psychologists, Mental Health NHS workers, Social Workers, Community Link Workers, Youth Workers, School Nurse, Careers Adviser, Community Police and others.

There are many ways in which a child can receive additional support. This can be provided universally by the class teacher within the classroom or at times children with particular needs may also be supported by a member of support staff, for example a Pupil Support Assistant or senior peer helper. Some pupils require specialist support to assist them in overcoming their additional needs which may involve interventions that take place outwith the classroom.

Universal Support

All staff at Perth Academy are expected to take a child-centred approach which promotes and supports wellbeing, inclusion, equality and fairness. All pupils are given planning opportunities to provide them with the right support to allow them to realise their potential for achievement. This support occurs within each classroom and is enhanced through the work undertaken as part of the home room structure.

GIRFEC

Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) is the Scottish Government's approach to promoting the wellbeing of children and young people. Wellbeing is described by 8 'indicators':



These eight words help everyone to understand wellbeing in the same way and use the same language to talk about it. Sometimes the initials of the words are used, and the wellbeing indicators are referred to as SHANARRI.

The vast majority of Scotland's children and young people get all the help and support they need from within their families and their wider, local communities. But at times, a child, young person or family might need extra help or support from school or partner agencies. The GIRFEC approach aims to make it as easy as possible for any child or young person (and their parents) to get the help or support that they need. Within schools, key staff are available to children, young people and their parents/carers to provide help, advice or support.

The Child or Young Person's Plan (CYPP) is one single plan which helps to ensure that everyone works together to deliver better outcomes for the child or young person who needs additional support and their family. Some times an Integrated Education Plan (IEP) or Co-ordinated Support Plan (CSP) will be put in place if a number of agencies are involve in supporting a young person.

Home Room

Curriculum for Excellence outlines an entitlement for all pupils to regular discussions about their learning with a key adult in school who knows them well. This person is their Principal Teacher of Guidance however their Home Room tutor provides an important 'anchor' in school, seeing their pupils every day they welcome young people to school to start their day and can sometimes notice changes or help with discussions about any issues arising for a young person. We call it Home Room as this was the name chosen by young people and because it suggests a home in school.

All pupils in Perth Academy are part of a Home Room class who are taught for 8 minutes per day by their Home Room tutor. This allows opportunity to register pupils daily but also to focus on our vision & values, ensure effective communication and provide a home base for each pupil in the school community.

How does Home Room benefit pupils?

A caring connecting environment, a 'check in' with a key adult before they start each day. A consistent interaction with an adult who knows them and who they know well. Peer interaction and engagement, this is important as some young people can be quite isolated at the weekends and when not in school. If things change for the young person and they need additional, targeted support there is a very good chance that this will be spotted early by their tutor. Supports the house system giving a sense of belonging and identity. Provides a soft start to the school day and a chance to get ready to learn. Pencils and pens for example are provided if required.

How does it benefit staff and the wider school community?

Creates order, settles pupils at the start of the day and gives them a 'base' in the school
Provides a clear avenue for communication with staff and pupils
Provides opportunity for a wider whole school community involvement
Time for Support Faculty staff to see pupils and support them more effectively without disrupting learning and teaching.

Targeted Support

Where a young person has an identified additional support needs and requires targeted support a young person's planning meeting will often take place and a plan and strategies will be agreed with the young person, their parent/carer and shared with their teachers. This should be regularly reviewed to monitor progress. If a parent is concerned about their child's learning or thinks they require additional support they should contact their child's Principal Teacher of Guidance.

Assessment of Need

Where a possible additional support need is identified, where required the Support for Learning department will provide support to assess that need and to share information with teachers via a Pupil Support Overview (PSO). Over 200 pupils in Perth Academy currently have a PSO.

Targeted support is any additional focused support which pupils may require for short or longer periods of time to help them overcome barriers to their learning.

For example, although not an exhaustive list, a pupil who may;

- Has a specific learning need e.g., dyslexia, ADHD or is neurodiverse
- Is bereaved
- Is experiencing mental health difficulties
- Is experiencing bullying behaviour
- Has behavioural, or social communication difficulties
- Has a hearing, visual or physical impairment
- Is a looked after child
- Does not attend school regularly

The Additional Support Needs department consists of 7 teachers and a number of Pupil Support Assistants. They work closely with House teams to monitor and co-ordinate specifically planned programmes, including Children & Young Person Plans and Co-ordinated Support Plans, as detailed in The Education (Additional, Support Needs) (Scotland) Act 2004, amended 2017.

Mr M O’Gorman (01738 472496) is the Principal Teacher of Support for Learning and is happy to discuss any issues of concern or support needs with parents.

Inclusion Project

Perth Academy’s Inclusion project has been running for 9 years. It operates from an area in school known as ‘The Zone’. It provides targeted support to those pupils experiencing social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. This is funded from our Pupil Equity Funding provided directly from the Scottish Government to help to close the poverty related attainment gap. Many of our young people who face social injustice and adversity benefit from the support of this project.

As an integral part of school approaches to Relationships, our Senior Project Officer, Inclusion is an experienced professional with a social work qualification who works with pupils on a one-to-one or small group basis, supporting young people to explore their understanding of and develop strategies for managing learning and relationships with greater success. Topics covered may include: risk-taking behaviour, self-esteem, self-concept, conflict resolution, anger management, self-confidence, social skills and mental well-being. These proactive interventions are tailored to individuals and are usually part of wider plan for each young person involved, often alongside other agency partners, with their support being co-ordinated by their Principal Teacher of Guidance.

The Zone is also open at lunch and break times for a ‘drop in’. This is supported by a number of staff who volunteer their time to help out. The Inclusion programme also offers an enterprise opportunity as part of the steps for work course, young people, developing life skills through the ordering, preparation, purchasing, cooking/baking for staff lunches and special events such as parent engagement evenings. The Zone has recently benefited from the installation of a professional level barista machine. Young people are undertaking qualifications in this area in partnership with UHI Perth.

Resolve

When any young person is excluded from school there are often negative outcomes; they become further isolated from the school community, often do not complete schoolwork and in some cases may put themselves at risk. At Perth Academy we seek to prevent exclusion through our Resolve programme. This process seeks to interrupt and redirect where pupils are at risk of exclusion through an alternative programme. A young person undertaking Resolve is supported through a programme of reflection, restoration and agrees aims for a return to school, they will also do some work for classes. Parents play a significant role in this process and are asked for agreement and to attend a meeting following completion of the programme. Perth Academy's Inclusion Project has been recognised nationally as an example of good practice, with staff and young people making presentations at various events and in 2018 being awarded a Perth and Kinross Securing the Future Silver award.

Alternative Targeted Programmes

Perth Academy works with a range of partners to support the provision of targeted support.

The Bield at Blackruthven offers horticulture and enterprise facilities where a number of pupils spend time developing a range of life skills- preparing, planting, maintaining and harvesting fruit and vegetables, and helping with animal husbandry and care. Produce is then sold and money reinvested into the project. Aply led by two members of the support staff, this programme helps develop life skills, build self-confidence, teamwork, mentoring, social skills development and leadership skills. We are very proud of this support intervention which has recently added an additional group. For some pupils their efforts may be recognised in the achievement of an SQA Rural Skills qualification.

Intensive Support Provision

Perth Academy is proud to host an intensive support provision which is an integral part of the school and provides full-time places for pupils with a range of complex additional support needs. **Pupils are placed from across Perth and Kinross by a central ASN placement panel.** Pupils accessing the intensive support provision receive an individualised, pupil-centred educational programme, as outlined in their Individual Education Programme or Coordinated Support Plan. Pupils are full participants in the life of the school and are provided with opportunities for a rich learning and social experience appropriate to their needs. The intensive support provision is staffed by a number of experienced and specially trained teachers and assistants under the supervision of the Principal Teacher of the Intensive Support Provision, Mrs L Hale. Any enquiries regarding this provision can be made directly to the Head Teacher or Depute (Support), who will direct parents to the relevant officer at Perth and Kinross Council.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

For those pupils for whom English is an additional (not their first) language, the support department is involved in providing those pupils with additional help. The support department can also call upon assistance from colleagues (from outside the school) with various language specialisms from the Perth & Kinross Council EAL service (<https://www.pkc.gov.uk/article/17322/English-as-an-Additional-Language-EAL-service>)

The Hub

Perth Academy provides targeted support for identified pupils requiring support with development of their learning or social, emotional and behavioural skills. Support may consist of targeted interventions in small groups or individually. Staff are trained in a range of additional support needs and work with subject teachers to support young people to complete class work. For some pupils accessing the 'Hub' provides time and space to simply

reinforce their class work in a welcoming, quiet and supportive environment if a full time, in-class school experience is proving challenging.

Identification of support needs

A thorough transition process occurs for pupils with identified needs before they start at Perth Academy (see above section under heading 'Transitions')

Should parents have concerns about their child facing any barrier to learning they are encouraged to contact their guidance teacher, key contact or Principal Teacher of Additional Support Needs to highlight and discuss these concerns. Parents can contact the relevant person by telephone, email or speaking to a member of the Additional Support Needs department during parents' evenings.

Perth Academy has internal processes which communicate pupil needs and strategies to support learning and also allows any staff to raise concerns about a pupil's needs or progress. In the event that a concern is raised regarding progress in learning, parents will be contacted to discuss and share and create a plan for any specific concern that may require targeted support. Pupil progress is continually tracked and monitored and reported to parents. Where required, pupils will have a Child or Young Person's Plan and these will be reviewed at Child's & Young Person's Plan meetings. If at any time a parent wishes to discuss their child's needs they should contact the school office and they will be directed to the correct contact for action.

Care Experience Young People

As a school we are committed to keep the promise made to care experience young people. Any young person on our roll receives special attention in relation to their progress, learning and support as part of our Perth & Kinross Council corporate parenting role. With equity as one of our school values, we understand that care experienced young people's needs can be different to those of other children. There were 31 looked after children on our school roll in 2023/24. Perth Academy has a member of the Guidance team who has a strategic responsibility for supporting care experienced learners.

Scotland made **a promise** to care experienced children and young people:



You **will** grow up loved, safe and respected.
And by 2030, that promise **must be kept**.

Young Carers

Many children have caring responsibilities. This can be extremely challenging for children and young people in addition to trying to learn. There were 40 young people identified as young carers in Perth Academy in session 2023-24 however many young people care but

this is never identified. There is a focus on what being a young carer means (<https://young.scot/get-informed/what-does-being-a-young-carer-mean>) as part of our PSE programme and there is a Principal Teacher of Guidance who has a strategic role in leading on young carers.

Further information

Scottish Ministers advise that further information and support to parents of children and young people with ASN is available from various organisations. These organisations are identified under the Additional Support Needs (Sources of Information) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2011 as;

(a) Children in Scotland: Working for Children and Their Families, trading as “Enquire – the Scottish advice and information service for additional support for learning”, a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SC003527.

Enquire offers independent, confidential advice and information on Additional Support Needs.

Telephone Helpline: 0845 123 2303

Email Enquiry Service: info@enquire.org.uk

Advice and information is also available at: www.enquire.org.uk

Enquire provides a range of clear and easy to read guides and factsheets including The Parents’ Guide to Additional Support Needs.

(b) Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance, a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SC033576.

(c) Scottish Child Law Centre, a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SC012741.

Further information on Additional Support Needs is available on PKC website <http://www.pkc.gov.uk/article/17278/Schools-additional-support->

10. School Improvement

Standards and Quality Report

A copy of the latest Perth Academy Standards & Quality Report can be found on our school website.

School Improvement: Attainment

Perth Academy has a well-established and positive reputation for success in academic performance. Covering a wide and varied catchment area pupil perform consistently well academically broadly in line with local and national performance measures.

Performance data about the school can be found online by searching for Perth Academy at the following location:

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone>

SCQF Scottish Qualifications Framework

Almost all qualifications such as National Qualifications such as National 5 and Higher

completed in school hold an SCQF points tariff value. These points can be totalled. It is on this points system that university entry and total

School Improvement Plan



School Improvement Plan 24-25

As a TEAM, we will RISE

Together a kind, inclusive community
Engaged in fun, inspiring learning
Achieving, building skills for life
Motivated and ambitious to learn

- Improve learning & teaching
- Increase pupil attendance and engagement
- Develop a shared understanding of wellbeing
- Promote and increase leadership at all levels
- Review our curricular offer

Respect, Integrity, Safety, Equity

11. School Policies & Practical Information

We follow a range of school and authority policies. A number of these are outlined below while others, including our emergency closure procedures, can be accessed through the school website.

Perth Academy School Uniform

Perth Academy has a range of school uniform options available agreed on in consultation with pupils and staff. Further information about this can be accessed on the school website.

Relationships Policy

The school operates a values-driven, relational approach to supporting young people. School is a place in which young people can make mistakes and learn from these.

The school approaches are based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The school has achieved a SILVER award in the Rights Respecting Schools programme.

More information about our Relationships Policy can be found on the school website.

The School Day

| Perth Academy School Day 2024-2025 | | |
|---|----------------------|------------------|
| Mon to Fri | | |
| Period | 08.55 - 09.03 | Home Room |
| 1 | 09.03 - 09.49 | |
| 2 | 09.49 - 10.35 | |
| | 10.35 - 10.55 | Interval |
| 3 | 10.55 - 11.41 | |
| 4 | 11.41 - 12.27 | |
| 5 | 12.27 - 13.13 | |
| | 13.13 - 13.58 | Lunch |
| 6 | 13.58 - 14.44 | |
| 7 | 14.44 - 15.30 | |

Assemblies take place for year groups on the first day of every new term. House Assemblies take place twice termly during allocated Home Room times. Additional Assemblies are arranged as and when required.

Information on activities, groups, clubs and opportunities for pupils to be involved

The school offers a very wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities, sporting, recreational and cultural, which we see as an important element in educational provision. This was recognised by HMIE when they inspected the school in 2024 and is maintained as a key strength of our school.

Our fifteen acres of playing fields, including our new all-weather facility are used on Saturday mornings by rugby and hockey teams of all ages, and the games hall makes possible a wide variety of indoor sporting activities. More than 75 pupils this year took part in Duke of Edinburgh's Award programmes at bronze, silver and gold levels.

Music is an essential educational experience, both in performance and appreciation, and in addition to class teaching and instrumental instruction, many musical interests are catered for at lunchtime and after school. As well as a large and accomplished school orchestra, there are a string orchestra, wind band, brass band, swing band, many vocal groups and smaller instrumental groups and rock bands. The school plays an active part in the musical life of Perth, being prominent in the central musical groups, and we participate fully in the Perth Festival of the Arts, the Competitive Festival, and on numerous occasions in the local community. There is a large-scale Carol Concert every Christmas as well as seasonal musical production for both senior and junior pupils.

Annually senior pupils plan, produce and market the Yearbook – a record of the current school year. Public speaking, STEM activities and enterprise activities are also successful areas of activity.

A current extra-curricular timetable is available on the school website.

Transport

For pupils living within the school's catchment area, the Council provides free transport or travelling expenses if the pupil would otherwise have to walk more than three miles. In these cases, bus passes are issued where suitable public transport exists, and contract transport is arranged where there is no public transport.

Parents who have made successful placing requests for their children to attend this school rather than another have to make their own transport arrangements. Vacant seats on contract transport may be made available to pupils who are not normally entitled to free transport.

Pupils coming from feeder primary schools will be issued with the application forms in their primary schools in the summer term. Otherwise, forms are available from the school office.

Full details of authority policy are available in Section 2 of this document.

Safety

It is expected that pupils will behave responsibly and comply with all safety requirements. The support of parents in promoting good practice in health and safety matters is of great importance to the school.

Movement in the school must be orderly and controlled; prefects and staff are on duty during breaks and lunchtime and their instructions must be observed.

At least one planned fire evacuation drill is held each term. Pupils must behave in a sensible manner during these. The school can be completely evacuated in under three minutes in normal circumstances.

Health and Safety matters in school are co-ordinated by Mrs C Leishman (Business Manager) who convenes the Health & Safety Committee in school.

Illness and Accidents

There is a room equipped for basic first aid. This room is not staffed and the school does not have an on-site medical professional. It should be noted that Council Guidelines do not permit medication, including over the counter medications, to be administered by school staff. Young people who have an arrangement to take prescription medication or over-the counter medication in school self-administer this in the first aid room supervised by our first aider.

Parents are asked not to send children to school when they are unwell.

Pupils who feel ill must not go home without first reporting to a member of staff. If your child contacts you to say they are unwell, please direct them to the school office rather than making arrangements yourselves as the school needs to know if your child is leaving the school for any reason. If it becomes necessary for a child to be taken home, parents will be telephoned and should be prepared to make arrangements to collect the child promptly from school. For this purpose, it is helpful if the school can be notified of any changes in emergency contacts or of parents' daytime telephone numbers.

In the event of accident, the pupil will be given appropriate first aid, and if required emergency services will be contacted. If your child requires to attend the A & E department of Perth Royal Infirmary, we will ask that parents arrange to collect their child to take them there. In the event of emergency services involvement, an adult will always stay with the pupil until the parent arrives.

It is very important that the school should be informed immediately of any special medical conditions which may affect the child in school, e.g. asthma, epilepsy, or any allergies, poor eyesight, deafness etc.

Medical Protocols

For young people who require a medical protocol, for example a young person who suffers from epilepsy or severe allergies, this process will be agreed between the school, young person and parent. Mr O’Gorman, Principal Teacher of support has responsibility for this. Should your child develop the need for a medical protocol, please contact Mr O’Gorman via the school office.

School Meals

Meals cooked in school are provided in the school dining room at lunchtime on a cafeteria basis. There is a pre-order facility available through the Vericool app. Facilities are also provided for pupils who bring a packed lunch.

The marketing of junk food to children can skew their idea of what constitutes a balanced meal – foods high in fat, salt or sugar are increasingly dominating young people’s diets. In school, they will be in an environment that takes more responsibility for promoting healthier food & drink choices.

Secondary schools operate a cafeteria style service with a wide choice of healthy food options being made available. Implementation of the Scottish Nutrient Standards have seen a major overhaul of the traditional secondary school menu and there is now an abundance of freshly prepared and tempting food options which are lower in fat, salt & sugar. These include a daily choice of homemade meals including vegetarian option, complimentary salad, vegetables and bread with main meals, healthy meal deals, nutritionally improved snack items, healthier drinks options including waters, smoothies & fruit juices plus a great deli selection. The cost varies according to the individual choice from the menu.

Cashless Catering operates in all secondary schools, where monetary value is held in a pupil account. This account is accessed via ParentPay and the pupil’s Young Scot, National Entitlement Card* (NEC). These cards provide secure access to a pupil’s account where value is retained on the system and not the card.

All payments & expenditure can be fully tracked by the pupil on request. Balances can be accessed at the revaluation machines at any time and itemised transactions are on display through customer readers at all till points. Free school meals pupils have value added automatically each day which can be added to by the pupil if desired. Parents need to ensure that they provide funds via parentpay so that school meal debt does not accrue. Should this be the case the school will contact you to flag this up. We run a parent café on a Monday after school which provides welfare rights and benefits advice to ensure parents who face financial challenges are in receipt of all relevant benefits.

Where young people choose to use local shops to purchase lunch it is expected that young people will represent the school and its values in relation to respect and integrity, this includes disposing of litter mindfully. It is worth noting that parents can have a much greater oversight of what their children are purchasing if their lunch is provided via Parentpay and the school system.

ParentPay

If you have not yet activated your ParentPay account, please could we encourage you to log in. This will help to remove cash and cheques from the school. If you have misplaced your activation letter, please contact the school for a replacement.

We also offer a healthy break time service and a pre-order facility. New developments are continually being assessed and introduced to enable the pupils to have access to a safe and welcoming quick service environment.

An example menu and current price list are accessible via Perth & Kinross Council's web pages, following the school's links:

<https://www.pkc.gov.uk/article/17331/Secondary-school-meals>

The school meals service is delivered by our operational partners, Tayside Contracts <https://www.tayside-contracts.co.uk/>

The Lady Mackenzie Library

The library occupies the central area of the building. In addition to fiction, graphics, information books to borrow, there is a reference section and access to online resources. The library offers good private study facilities for senior pupils and classes. There is an extensive Careers Section. 30 computers are available for class use or individual pupils at lunchtimes and after school.

The Centre is open to pupils during the latter part of lunchtime and after school until 4.15pm, or later by arrangement with Library staff.

Senior Pupil Leadership Team

The SPLT is a team of 20 pupils consisting of Head Prefects Depute Head Prefects, 2 House captains and two Vice Captains for each house and includes 2 S5 and 2 S4 Captains.

There are approximately sixty prefects from the fifth and sixth years. Training is provided. Prefects are expected to fulfil a contract which is validated by a parent/carer. Prefects make a valuable contribution to the school, not only by modelling the school vision and values for younger pupils, but also by their contribution to the various social and extra-curricular activities. Prefects can earn a Saltire awards for volunteering and their role can be used as an example of leadership and commitment in job and university/college applications.

Pupil Voice and Learner Participation

Ensuring young people have a say in decisions that affect them is their right. We currently have a group of young people who undertake pupil voice consultations and also regularly involve young people in surveys and evaluations of the school and the curriculum. The school is developing its structure for pupil voice and participation.

Anti-Bullying

At Perth Academy we strive to create a kind, inclusive and safe environment in which pupils can develop naturally and reach their full potential in an atmosphere free from fear and intimidation. Bullying in its widest sense often occurs when large groups of people are brought together, we have a duty to recognise this, educate young people about this, minimise it and address it within Perth Academy when it occurs.

We follow Perth & Kinross Council's Anti-bullying Policy.

A copy of this policy can be found on our website or by clicking the link below:

<https://www.pkc.gov.uk/article/17426/Bullying-and-harrasment>

Implementation of this policy helps us in providing a secure, stable environment where all pupils, staff and parents are valued and advises pupils, parents and staff on how to deal effectively with bullying.

We encourage a climate where young people and parents can share, with confidence, concerns they may have regarding the wellbeing of their child. We encourage pupils to tell staff about bullying behaviours and not to ignore it.

In resolving conflict, we aim to facilitate intervention in a constructive way in any bullying situation reported.

How we deal with bullying behaviour

From their first day in Perth Academy pupils are encouraged to speak to their Guidance or Home Room Teacher or any other teacher and tell them if they or any others perceive they are being bullied.

On receiving information, the Guidance Staff discuss the matter in a sensitive, confidential manner with all parties involved.

Interventions and actions around bullying behaviour as appropriate, is implemented by Senior Staff. This may include time in our Inclusion programme to help young people to develop the skills to behave and respond appropriately.

We aim to resolve difficult situations and relationship break downs through a restorative approach. Pupils (and sometimes staff) are supported to identify positive solutions and plans going forward.

Guidance Staff monitor the subsequent behaviour/attitude of all parties involved, liaise with parents and provide support and encouragement when needed.

The school has a specific system for the recording of bullying incidents. This is completed by Principal Teachers of Guidance. There is also a feedback form for young people who have reported bullying to ensure they have their say on whether the support has been successful and that the issues have been effectively resolved.

12. Child Protection

Child Protection

The wellbeing of children and young people is everyone's responsibility. Schools are required to report if we think any child is at risk of harm. Should you wish to talk further about Child Protection and the safety of children please feel free to contact the school.

Perth Academy's designated Child Protection Co-ordinator is Mr Mawhirt [DHT].
All Principal Teachers of Guidance are child protection officers.

Atholl House

Mrs K Dow

Mrs E Rodger/Mrs G Arnott

Birnam House

Mr S O'Donnell

Mr J McKenna

Clunie House
Miss E Muldoon
Mrs J Honeyman

Support for Learning
Mrs L Hale (Intensive Support Provision)

As a school we have close contacts with a range of partners any or all of whom may become involved if concerns about risk of harm emerge.
In almost all cases we ensure that parents are informed and participate in any action which we may initiate regarding their child.

Full details of the local authority policy are in Section 2 of this document.

