

THE GORDON SCHOOLS

Rector's Introduction

Welcome to The Gordon Schools. Our school has a rich and successful history, blended with a modern, forward-thinking direction. We aim to provide a high quality educational experience for all our pupils, helping them to be successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors to the school, the local community and society in general.

The Gordon Schools is a non-denominational, comprehensive secondary school, providing education for pupils aged 11 to 18 years old. The school has an established educational tradition, stretching back 175 years to its origins where the Duchess of Gordon founded the school and the famous architect, Archibald Simpson, designed the original buildings which provide a striking and distinctive image of the school. We draw from an area of up to sixteen miles around the town of Huntly in the north east of Scotland. Our current school roll stands at around 737 pupils.

The school has very strong links with the local community, where we play a key and distinctive role in Huntly and the surrounding areas. Involvement with local groups, businesses and organisations are encouraged to provide a rich educational tapestry for our young people and we value the input of parents and guardians who are very much involved in the life of The Gordon Schools. There are effective pastoral and support mechanisms in place for all pupils and each pupil's achievements are valued and encouraged.

There are many distinctive features of The Gordon Schools, including regular assemblies, a school dress code, School shows and concerts and a prize-giving event. We offer a broad range of extra-curricular experiences including a wide range of sports, music and arts experiences, and many of our pupils go on to represent the school and even the country in a variety of ways. We aspire to be a caring and friendly school where pupils and visitors alike feel welcome and a part of the school. We encourage our pupils to have a responsible approach to life and we promote positive behaviour in all of our young people.

We aim to provide quality learning and teaching experiences at The Gordon Schools. Prior learning is always important whether moving from primary to secondary school or from one stage to the next. We have high expectations of our pupils and encourage them to fulfil their potential and attain high standards. We invest in top quality staff development and training to ensure that young people in The Gordon Schools have the best learning opportunities. The quality of pupils' learning is monitored closely by senior and promoted staff in the school.

We have a thriving Parent Forum and Parent Council and a Parent Fundraising Group to which we are grateful for helping to support the school. We aim to work closely with all carers of our pupils and always welcome positive and constructive ways of improving links between home and school.

As the Rector of The Gordon Schools, I am proud of the many developments and strengths of the school, where we provide many excellent opportunities for our pupils. We are committed to moving forward and embracing new technologies to provide a modern and relevant learning experience for everyone involved in the school. I hope that you find this prospectus a valuable and useful resource in finding out more about The Gordon Schools.



Mr Zander Hall, Rector

Zander Hall, Rector

The Gordon Schools

Aims

We believe that pupils should have high expectations and ambitions, and that their educational experiences should stretch them. All pupils in The Gordon Schools are encouraged to develop their talents and abilities to the greatest extent possible. This must take place in a happy, secure and purposeful environment, in which pupils develop and progress in a society rich in culture. There is a developing ethos, based on the qualities of openness, accountability and partnership, which emphasises high expectations, individual needs, equal opportunities and participation within a caring community. We have a vision of school which deploys highly motivated and skilled staff, enables ALL young people to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors, makes families proud, and reflects the values on which Scottish society is based. We are committed to continuous improvement through partnership, working closely with people with whom we share a common purpose.

Our aims:

1. Achievement and Attainment

We have high, consistent expectations for all pupils, encouraging them to strive for the highest standards in their personal and social development and in their educational attainment.

2. Framework for Learning

We provide the best kinds of learning and teaching experiences, having a well managed and well resourced curriculum, delivered by dedicated and highly skilled staff. We are a well-disciplined school, with an open, friendly ethos. We are accountable, aiming to reflect excellence in education.

3. Inclusion and Equality

We are a school in which pupils of every race, gender, background and learning need are accepted and valued. We promote equality, within a caring community, enabling pupils to have access to and experience of the whole curriculum at an appropriate level. We value each young person as an individual, being supportive, encouraging each pupil to develop her or his abilities.

4. Values and Citizenship

We develop good relationships between all involved in education, by working in partnership. We are aware of the environment, taking care of it, helping to manage its resources. We also value the responsibilities involved in promoting good citizenship.

5. Learning for Life

We have a vibrant, participative and lively school, rich in academic, sporting, cultural and social activities and experiences. We value working with pupils to build skills and confidence to participate in a changing world, encouraging creativity and ambition.

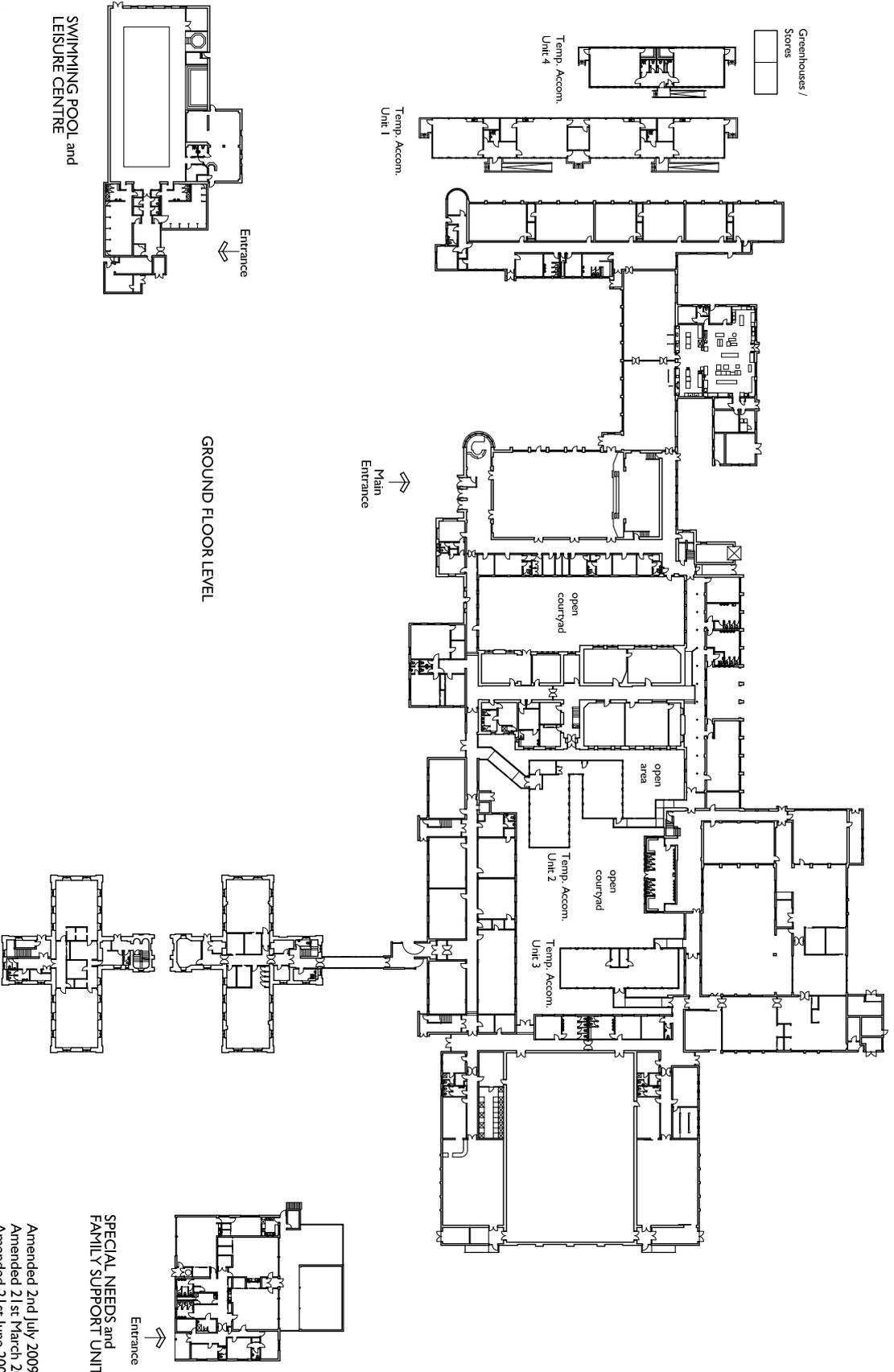
Building and Layout

Huntly is situated adjacent to the A96 Aberdeen-Elgin Road, north west of Aberdeen. Proceeding from the town square by Castle Street, visitors will be struck by the impressive view which opens out at the top of the town, featuring an area of mature trees in which The Gordon Schools' buildings are set. We are often asked, "Why The Gordon Schools and not just School?" In 1839 the last Duchess of Gordon, known as the 'Good Duchess', erected a building in the town of Huntly as a memorial to her late husband. She invited the four major local schools to occupy it, and The Gordon Schools was born. This building still stands today as part of our present accommodation. It was renovated a number of years ago and is now a striking home for our Music, Drama and Home Economics departments. The Gordon Schools celebrated 150 years of continuous education in Huntly in 1989, with festivities, a pageant, and a set of commemorative items including jumpers, ties, cups and a historical booklet.

The school has steadily grown over the years in a succession of stages, with buildings linked by a network of corridors. We have a large assembly hall, gymnasium, and games hall, together with well-equipped and pleasant classrooms in all subjects. We are fortunate in having our playing fields and all-weather sporting facilities on the same site as the school and doubly fortunate in having access to the grounds of the local Cricket and Rugby Clubs adjacent to the school. We also have the local Authority's modern swimming pool on-site and use this as part of our Physical Education curriculum. All of these facilities feature strongly in our extra-curricular programmes.



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Amended 2nd July 2009
 Amended 21st March 2008
 Amended 21st June 2005

Floor Plan

Scale N.T.S. OS Ref Date Drawn 12 Mar. 03 By PB

ASSET REGISTER DRAWING 1 of 18

PMS0010889 rfl HUNTLY ACADEMY Dept Education
 The Gordon Schools, Huntly, AB54 4SE

Aberdeenshire

COUNCIL



Property

Woodhill House Westburn Road Aberdeen AB16 5GB Tel. (01467) 620981

Property is a part of the Transportation and Infrastructure Service.

Extra-curricular Activities

Sports, activities, clubs and societies are flourishing in school. Sports offered include athletics, badminton, cross-country running, football, hockey, netball, rugby, swimming and volleyball, to name just a few. There has been sporting representation regionally and nationally. We have enjoyed successes at debating and public speaking. Seniors are involved in the *Buddy Support System* and *Paired Reading* with first year pupils, in *Enterprise, citizenship* and *Health and Well Being* activity. We have a training orchestra, a senior orchestra and a school windband. There are also school shows.

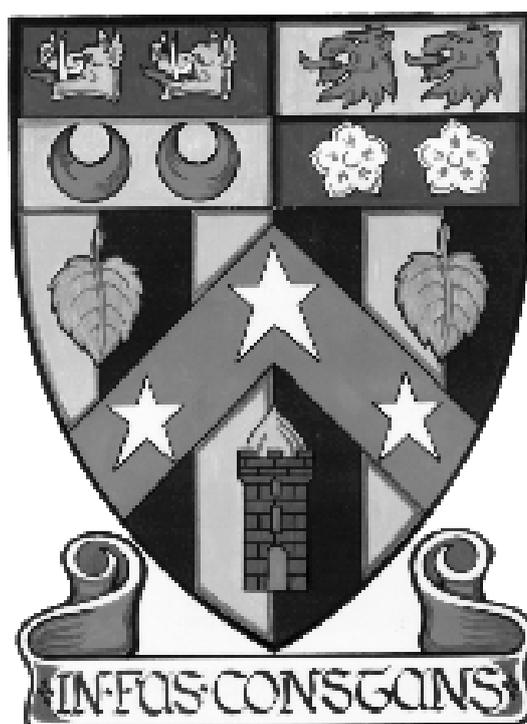
There are trips throughout the country and abroad. All pupils in all years are given wide and varied opportunities to participate in the life of the school.

The Gordon Schools' Crest

At the top of the school crest, two yellow boars' heads on an azure background represent the Gordon family. Two lion's heads on a gold background are linked with Badenoch. Two red crescents on a gold background link with Seton. Two fraises, or strawberry flowers, on an azure background represent Fraser. The Gordon family owned Badenoch, Seton and Fraser lands and these four names are remembered in the names of our House system. A red chevron with silver stars carries the link with the Brodie Arms, the 5th Duke of Gordon having married Elizabeth Brodie. The colours black and gold relate to the Barry Arms of Strathbogie. The green lime leaves represent our Linden trees. The grey tower represents the tower of the Simpson Building, the original building dating from 1839. The motto *In Fas Constans* derives from *Bydand*, which appears on the armorial bearings of the Gordon family. Both mean *Steadfast* or *Abiding*.

Assemblies

Pupils attend regular assemblies which help to celebrate pupil achievements, cover key moral and important issues and communicate key messages to pupils. Special Assemblies or individual year group Assemblies are often held.



School Dress Code

An overwhelming majority of parents gave their full backing to our school dress code and for the wearing of school uniform on a daily basis. We believe that how pupils dress is important. We also believe that wearing our school uniform makes for a positive approach to school life. We encourage all pupils to be smart in appearance by wearing school uniform each and every day. Here are our reasons:

- First, wearing school uniform each day asks a lot of pupils. It encourages self-respect, self-confidence and a constructive attitude to work. This cannot happen by itself of course, but it can contribute to an overall ethos.
- Second, it helps to create a sense of equality, for the best of reasons. If everyone is dressed in a similar way, then pupils and their families are protected from the worst excesses and expenses of current fashion.
- Third, it encourages a sense of identification and belonging to a school community, with members helping and supporting each other, sharing and participating in successes.
- Fourth, and finally, it presents a positive image of the school to the wider community, with pupils acting as ambassadors on behalf of The Gordon Schools.



SCHOOL DRESS CODE

- Black school jumper/sweatshirt/cardigan with the school crest
- Black blazer with school crest (optional)
- Black school skirt or trousers
- Black or white shirt or blouse
- Black or white polo shirt with or without school crest
- School Tie



NOT SCHOOL DRESS CODE

- Hats/scarves – not to be worn in school building
- Jeans – blue or black
- Vest tops, scoop neck tops
- Leggings and joggers
- Short shorts
- Sports tops



School Day

08.55-09.05am: Registration	11.15-12.05pm: Period 3	2.50-3.45pm: Period 6
09.05-10.05am: Period 1	12.05-1.00pm: Period 4	3.45pm: Close of school
10.05-10.55am: Period 2	1.00-2.00pm: Lunch	
10.55-11.15am: Interval	2.00-2.50pm: Period 5	

Communications

A School Calendar is issued to all parents each year. School information and good news stories are regularly posted on our website, to keep parents and the wider communities informed of pupil successes, Parents' Evenings, events, community ventures, and so on. Vital dates are also given. The 'Huntly Express' gives generous coverage to school news items and, in addition, provides the 'Chit Chat' column devoted to The Gordon Schools. Parents are, of course, advised also by letter of all important matters. Serious matters may be referred to the Rector or any member of Senior Management Team, however, parents and pupils should usually take any concerns initially to the school through the relevant Principal Teacher of Guidance. We have also introduced a system of sending home texts with key information.

Further contact details are available on the school website; www.thegordonschools.co.uk

Attendance and Punctuality

Good attendance and punctuality will help to foster better learning and good attainment.

All parents of children of school age have a duty to provide education suitable to age, ability and aptitude.

As part of an Aberdeenshire's approach to the management of pupil absences, we use a system called Groupcall, which allows us to contact parents/carers more quickly and efficiently to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Groupcall gives us the ability to send text messages to parent/carer's mobile phones or make automated telephone calls to parent /carers via telephone numbers supplied to the school. The system is primarily used to seek clarification on why a child is absent from school.

Parents should note that the majority of holidays taken during term time are categorised as *unauthorised absence*. Under **exceptional** circumstances the Head Teacher can authorise a family holiday during term time, following serious or terminal illness, bereavement or other traumatic events.

Improving attendance is vital for the school. There is a direct link between good attendance and good attainment

Parents are asked to ensure that pupils come to school **on time** each and every day. Latecoming seriously disrupts the work of classes and cannot be tolerated. Every effort will be made, with parental co-operation, to encourage good habits of punctuality in pupils. Latecomers should report to the Reception in order to register and to collect the appropriate slip that should be signed each period by subject teachers. This slip is returned to the Reception at the end of the day. Again, good punctuality is just as important as good attendance, in helping make for a settled start to daily work.

Session 2016-2017

Autumn Term 2016

In-service day for staff	Monday, 15 August 2016
School starts for pupils	Tuesday, 16 August 2016
Last day before Oct Break	Friday, 7 October 2016
School restarts	Monday, 24 October 2016
Last day of term	Tuesday, 21 December 2016

Spring term 2017

School restarts	Thursday, 5 January 2017
Mid-term holiday	Monday, 13 February 2017
Last day of term	Friday, 31 March 2017

In-service days	15 August 2016
	14 & 15 November 2016
	14 & 15 February 2017

Summer Term 2017

School restarts	Monday, 18 April 2017
May Day holiday	Monday 1 May 2017
Last day of session	Friday, 30 June 2017

Staff List

Senior Leadership Team:- Rector: Mr A Hall
Depute Rectors: Mr P Gaiter, Mrs M Anderson, Mrs C Grant
CSN Support Services Co-ordinator: Mr C Fleetham.

<u>Faculty Arts</u>	Mrs F Moffat, Faculty Head	Mathematics	Mrs K Burnett, PT Mr A Murdoch
Art	Mrs S Jacyna Mr A Burr		Mr A Forrest Dr P Hopwood (p/t)
Drama	Mis K Meldrum (Probationer)		Mrs S McGowan Mrs J Simpson (p/t)
Music	Mr R Mead Mrs A Moir		Mrs K Taylor (p/t)
Business Education,	Mr J Forbes, Faculty Head	PE	Mrs D Harper, Faculty Head Mr G Emslie
ICT & Enterprise	Mrs E Brown		Mr C Smith Mrs L Mitchell (p/t)
Computing	Mrs A Allan		
English	Mr I Morrison ,PT Mr G Leven (p/t) Mrs V Ross Mrs P Sangster (p/t) Mrs A Simpson (p/t) Mrs J Dixon Miss K Abercrombie Mr K McCarthy (Probationer)	Modern Languages	Mr A Sutcliffe, PT Mrs S McLeod Mr D Cholet
Guidance	Mrs J Bruce, PTG Miss C Hancy, PTG Mrs P Emslie, PTG Mrs L Fettes, PTG	Science	Mrs I Gardner, Faculty Head Dr R McKinnon, PT Mrs C Thomson Mr A Innes Miss J Raeside Mr K McIntosh
Home Economics	Mrs M Macdonald, PT Mrs K Chalmers		Mr N Rowand Mrs P McWilliam
Faculty Humanities		Technical	Mr K Griffiths (PT) Mr G Mitchell Mr N Wyllie Mr J Whittet
Geography	Mr N Burgess , Faculty Head Vacant		
History	Mr J Davidson, PT Mr A Parker		
Modern Studies	Mrs LM Ritchie Mrs A Van der Spoel Mr R Knak Miss L Bowman (Probationer)		
RMPS	Mrs D Harper , PT Mrs M Ritchie Mrs B Donald (p/t) Mrs C Gordon Mrs D Johnson (p/t) Mr P Hastie Mrs K Shepherd (p/t) Mr L Wright Mrs M Lee Mrs K MacDougall Mrs N Jennison (p/t) Mrs C May (p/t) Mrs V Grant Mrs R Stitt Mrs J McAdam Mrs H Robertson (p/t)	Non-Teaching Staff	Mrs C Mearns Mrs E Dougherty Mrs D Hamilton Mrs A Michie Miss L Brown Mrs A Robbie Mrs F Young Mr C Young Mr J Broderick Mr F Ross Mr J Mooty Mr K Linfoot Ms N Hughes Mr M Whyte Mr G Ross “ Mrs A Gray Miss V Grant
Learning Support (Huntly Network)	Mrs S Mitchell, PSA Mrs D Allan, PSA Mrs G Donaldson, PSA (temp) Mrs L Gerrie, PSA Ms J Geddes, PSA Mrs L Ross, PSA Mrs T Paterson, PSA Mrs C Sharp, PSA		Admin “ “ CSN Admin Janitorial (Primary) “ “ “ ICT ICT Technician Technical Ast “ School Nursing Assistant School Nurse (NHS) Librarian PSA Careers Advisor (P/T)

Transition from Primary to Secondary School

The majority of pupils in The Gordon Schools come from our associated Primary Schools.

Cairney School	Clatt School	Drumblade School	Forgue School	Gartly School
Glass School	Gordon Primary	Insch School*	Kennethmont School	Largue School
Lumsden School†	Premnay School*	Rhynie School	Oyne School*	

† **Dual-zoned for The Gordon Schools & Alford Academy** ***Dual-zoned for The Gordon Schools & Inverurie Academy**

To assist in the transition from Primary to Secondary, a number of teachers liaise with our associated Primary Schools throughout the session, including staff from the Guidance team, Learning Support, the Senior Management team, English, Mathematics and Modern Languages staff. Huntly Associated Schools Group meets regularly to co-ordinate developments. Cluster groups of Primary staff from associated Primary schools join with Secondary colleagues to review aspects of the P6-S1 curriculum and to co-ordinate developments.

An open evening for parents and guardians of pupils in Primary 7 is held early in the New Year. There are opportunities to meet senior staff and pupils from the school. Tours of the school are arranged, to view resources and curricular work in different subject areas. The Prospectus is issued in advance of this, along with newsletters and other advice leaflets.

A series of visits by secondary staff to associated Primary Schools in the summer term is followed by a three-day visit by Primary 7 pupils to The Gordon Schools in June. Visits are organised by members of the Senior Management team and Guidance staff and are hosted by Prefects and senior students. The days are varied and lively. An easy-to-follow Welcome Booklet is prepared each year, giving advice, facts, rules and information. To make the transition as smooth as possible and to lessen the impact of change, pupils meet new teaching staff in settled groups. They have an opportunity to learn about the secondary curriculum, to meet a range of subject departments and to see the range of new facilities, buildings and layouts. In addition, a small group of pupils meet on a regular basis in the summer term to support them in the transition to secondary. During the visit, a Parent's Evening is held in our Assembly Hall, involving brief specialist talks, presentations about the school, a fashion parade of school wear and presentations by first year pupils. There is an opportunity in an informal setting to ask questions, talk and establish contacts. The aim of all of this is to make sure that transition between Primary and Secondary is as smooth as possible. Senior pupils also act as *Buddies* to support first year pupils as they settle in school.

Families of pupils enrolling outwith transition time meet with Mrs Carol Grant, Depute Rector. Time is made available to provide parents with a guided tour and to give advice and information about school life.

House Arrangements

When pupils enrol at The Gordon Schools they are allocated to a House. This way of dividing pupils into four groupings, Badenoch, Fraser, Gordon and Seton, links pupils, from first to sixth year, with others in their families, under the care and direction of a member of the Guidance team. Along with a Guidance teacher, pupils also have a register Teacher who most often takes the class register each day. Each Register Teacher takes an interest in all pupils in his or her Tutor group and gets to know them. Our approaches draw on an extensive network of staff who know pupils and care for them. We also have a *Buddy Support System*. Each new first year pupil can meet regularly with a friendly, approachable senior pupil.

Guidance Staff

The work of the Guidance team is co-ordinated by Mrs Carol Grant, Depute Rector.

House	Principal Teacher of Guidance
Badenoch	Mrs Joan Bruce
Fraser	Miss Clare Hancy
Gordon	Mrs Pat Emslie
Seton	Mrs Linda Fettes

Guidance

Our Guidance teachers provide the link between home and school. Although all teachers in the school have responsibility for pupil welfare, it is our Guidance staff who are in a position to have a complete picture of pupil progress during their secondary school years. They provide support and guidance of a personal nature, assisting pupils to make well-considered and wise decisions. Guidance teachers see all their pupils on a weekly basis when teaching Personal and Social Education. Guidance teachers conduct routine interviews with pupils at each stage of their school career. Guidance teachers are also the link between the school and outside agencies, such as:

- * Universities
- * Careers Service
- * Psychological Services
- * Health Education
- * Social Work Department
- * Community Health & Development
- * Further Education Establishments
- * Children's Panel
- * Work Experience Agencies
- * School Medical Service
- * Associated Primary Schools

Guidance staff meet regularly with members of the senior management team to discuss all aspects of pupil welfare. There are also regular meetings to co-ordinate Support for Learners. This involves senior staff, Guidance, the Support for Learners team, Curriculum Support staff and external professionals. The progress and welfare of pupils experiencing particular difficulties are reviewed at these times.



Making Appointments

Whenever there is concern about the well being of pupils, Guidance teachers contact parents by telephone or by letter. In return, parents are asked to inform the appropriate member of the Guidance team of any circumstances that might affect a pupil's progress at school. Staff in The Gordon Schools value this sense of partnership between home and school. Should you wish to meet with a Guidance teacher an appointment should be made through the school office. The telephone number is 01466 792181. Parents are also encouraged to contact the Rector or members of the senior management team. If there is something causing real concern do not hesitate to get in touch. Someone will help. We are all concerned and will try to assist.

Progression

As pupils prepare for life after school, Guidance staff draw on specialist input from Skills Development Scotland and Careers programmes. The Careers Library and Careers databases are incorporated into programmes of advice. Guidance staff are involved in interviews and in the writing of references for employment, Further Education or University. From early contact in Primary School through to links maintained after leaving school, the Guidance role is high profile, warm, supportive and all embracing.

Personal and Social Education

What is Personal and Social Education?

The letters PSE stand for Personal and Social Education. All teachers in The Gordon Schools are concerned with and contribute to the health and well being of our pupils. In addition there is a structured PSE programme that is available to all pupils and is built into the timetable. The Guidance team delivers this programme for years S1 to S6. Their aim is to build up a supportive relationship with each group and, through their personal knowledge of the members of the group, help them to make progress in their social, academic and personal development over their time in school and to prepare for life outwith school. We are also developing the role of the Register Teacher, involving them in supporting pupils, in such areas as the use of study planners. Register Teachers also are involved in promoting good attendance and timekeeping, and in keeping good lines of communication open, advising pupils on information in the daily absence sheet.

What is a PSE programme?

In The Gordon Schools our programme consists of a variety of themes and topics that have been designed so that the content matches the level of maturity of the pupils. In each year of our programme there are common themes that we regard as important throughout a young person's development to adulthood. These include:

- developing personal qualifications and skills;
- developing personal relationships;
- reviewing progress;
- developing study skills;
- skills of decision-making and problem-solving;
- careers education;
- health education;
- caring for oneself and others.

Specific themes in each year

There are themes that occur at a certain time which help pupils in their progress throughout school.

S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to secondary school. • Study skills, organising new subjects and homework. • Recording personal and academic progress. • Making decisions about subjects for S3. • Developing knowledge and skills for adolescence, such as healthy living and personal relationships. • Introduction to Skills Development Scotland. • Profile. • Anti-Bullying. 					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induction to the senior school. • Further careers information in liaison with Skills Development Scotland. • Information about higher and further education, careers and funding. • Applying for university and college. • Preparing for leaving home. • Dealing with increased personal and academic responsibility. • Work Experience. 				
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing progress in chosen S3 courses. • Skills for work and work experience. • Careers education. • Further development of decision-making skills, for informed choices about healthy living and personal relationships. • First Aid Course. 		

Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies

From first to fourth year, pupils have one period of study a week, during which they study six major world religions - Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism. They also consider key questions relating to life and have a general introduction into morality, moral issues and philosophical thinking. The department makes an important contribution to the school's equal opportunities and citizenship programmes by encouraging pupils to acquire a good knowledge of different religious beliefs and practices so they can develop respect for and empathy with people whose cultures and way of life are different from our own. The study of key questions, and of morality as a subject in its own right, is intended to help pupils not only in the development of their critical thinking but also in their personal and social development.



Religious Observance

The Gordon Schools welcomes and values pupils from all faith backgrounds. It is non-denominational and has close links with all the Churches in the extended Huntly community. At Christmas, our school participates in services held by local ministers and, where appropriate, encourages presentations by religious groups and charities. The Gideons present first year pupils with a copy of the New Testament each year. The Scottish Executive has issued new guidelines for Religious Observance that should further assist in the spiritual development of all members of our school community.

Curriculum for Excellence at The Gordon Schools

The national *Curriculum for Excellence* programme has been introduced across Scotland to raise standards of learning for all 3 to 18 year olds. It aims to help prepare your child with the knowledge and skills he/she needs in a fast changing world with the key outcome being to ensure your child develops the skills, knowledge and understanding to be successful now and in future life.

What is the Curriculum?

Curriculum for Excellence takes a much broader view of the curriculum than previously and includes four main elements.

Curriculum areas and subjects	These are the ways in which learning is organised and delivered in classes e.g. Maths, English, Science, Expressive Arts etc
Interdisciplinary Learning	There is much more 'joined up' learning between and across subjects in the new curriculum. This helps make learning more relevant and realistic.
Ethos and life of the school	Within the school a positive ethos and atmosphere supports learning in its widest sense and supports the development of the four capacities.
Opportunities for personal achievement	Both within the classroom and beyond we aim to provide opportunities which encourage challenge, satisfaction, motivation and resilience.

Curriculum Areas and Subjects

These form the main part of pupil timetables. There are eight curriculum areas in the secondary curriculum. Each contains a range of subjects. Pupils will have studied across these curriculum areas at primary school.

The 8 Curriculum Areas	
Expressive Arts	Languages and Literacy
Sciences	Mathematics and Numeracy
Social Studies	Health and Wellbeing
Technologies	Religious and Moral Education

Each of the eight curriculum areas includes a number of 'Experiences and Outcomes' around which teachers plan their work with classes.

Within the new curriculum all teachers will focus on Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing. These 3 areas develop skills that underpin and support success in all other areas of learning.

The secondary curriculum is divided into two main stages as shown below:

S1-S3	Broad General Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All pupils follow a common course which includes study across all eight curriculum areas. This builds on learning from primary school. Pupils will have increasing opportunities to achieve and study in depth as they progress through their Broad General Education. In third year pupils will have the opportunity for some personalisation and choice in their curriculum. Towards the end of S2 they will choose courses from each curriculum area for study in S3.
S4 – S6	Senior Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the Senior Phase pupils will choose courses for qualifications. These will include the new SQA National 3, 4 and 5 courses as well as Higher and Advanced Higher. Towards the end of S3, S4 and S5 pupils will choose the SQA national exams that they wish to follow when they move into S4, S5 and S6. They will be supported in their choices by their guidance teachers and advice from subject teachers.

Assessment and Reporting

Teachers carry out continuous assessment as part of their daily practice to ensure that learning activities are meeting the needs of their pupils and extending and developing learning. Assessment information is used to track pupils' progress, inform planning, direct future learning and teaching activities and for reporting purposes.

The overall purpose of assessment is to support learning. Staff at The Gordon Schools use a variety of formative assessment techniques in teaching the children HOW they can improve upon their current standards of work. This applies to all pupils, regardless of ability and ensures that opportunities to progress and achieve are fair and inclusive.

As in all Aberdeenshire schools, baseline assessment tests are used to contribute to an overall measure of ability that strongly predicts subsequent achievement. Test results can be used to identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses, inform teaching and learning, identify gifted pupils and help identify pupils with a range of additional support needs.

Assessment in the Broad General Education continues to be based on the Curriculum for Excellence level system used in primary school.

Assessment in the Senior phase will be based on a variety of qualifications but mainly on SQA new National Qualifications.

Stage	Assessed by
S1-S3 Broad General Education	Mainly by Curriculum for Excellence Levels 3 and 4
S4-S6 Senior Phase	Mainly by SQA Coursework at national 2, 3 and 4. Exams and Coursework at National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher. Other qualifications may include Skills for work, Open University and Vocational Opportunities.

Reporting on pupil progress is an important link in communication between school and home. Formal reporting is carried out at different times of the session, for different year groups as follows for 15/16.

S1	Tracking Report	October
	Tracking Report	January
	Full CfE Report	June
	Parents Evening	October
S2	Tracking Report	November
	Full CfE Report	February
	Parents Evening	November
S3	Tracking Report	November
	Full CfE Report	March
	Parents Evening	March
S4/5/6	Tracking Report	October
	Tracking Report	December
	Parents Evening – S4	February
	Parents Evening – S5/6	March
	Tracking Report	March

Through dialogue at Parents' Evenings and through written Reports we provide parents with an in-depth review of progress in each subject and outline school achievement in it's wider sense. We are confident that parents welcome the wealth of information provided. We also encourage parents to provide feedback about both form and content of our reporting system and try to incorporate suggestions made.

Parents are invited at any time of the school year to contact Guidance staff in school, should an informal report be required on the progress of their daughter or son. Guidance staff may find it necessary to contact parents regarding progress outwith normal, formal reporting times. It is the strength of our system that communication between school and home is straightforward and welcomed.

Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

At The Gordon Schools, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is seen as playing a vital part in the curriculum. We encourage the integration and use of ICT in all subject courses. Pupils have access to technology through our extensive ICT network. The school network, links all subject classrooms throughout the school, including the school Library. Pupils have direct access to the Internet. Glow is the name for the Scottish Schools' Digital Network which links all schools in Scotland. All pupils and staff in schools have a Glow user name to allow them access to this valuable area for Educational resources. Any pupils who have forgotten their username and password can ask for help from either Mrs Anderson, Mrs Brown or Mr Forrest. In addition, there are five fully equipped ICT rooms with multi-media facilities. This includes three rooms in Business Studies and Computing departments, two further ICT rooms and portable laptops suites, available under a booking system to subject staff for curricular work and to Guidance and Tutors for delivery of programmes of Personal and Social Education. Video conferencing equipment is also available within the school and it has been used to link with other schools to support additional learning.

For example, multi-media computers in the ICT Centre in the Simpson Building are used by pupils in Personal and Social Education to record achievement and maintain a personal record of success. There is a variety of software installed on the school network for pupil use. Senior pupils can access the most up-to-date software for careers education. They can complete electronically their records of achievement and personal statements for application to University.

There is a planned programme of ICT training for all pupils in The Gordon Schools. Teachers from the departments of Business Studies and Computing deliver a course of training in ICT skills to all pupils in first year. In second year, the ICT component is delivered in context, built into every subject course. After third year, the amount of ICT used by a pupil depends on subject choice, although the use of ICT is an important part of learning in most courses. Pupils in fifth and sixth year have the option of studying towards the internationally recognised European Computer Driving Licence.

Regardless of subject choice, however, we aim to involve all pupils over a four year period in the following core ICT areas: word processing, use of databases, spreadsheets, desktop publishing, electronic mail, the internet, graphics and creating a website. The address of our school's website is given at the start of this Prospectus. There are also opportunities to use a wide variety of software relating to subject departments. It is also important that our curriculum helps to meet that challenge for each pupil. With careful planning and staff and pupil commitment we aim to ensure that our students are fully equipped to meet the technological challenges of the twenty first century.

Instrumental Tuition

Instrumental tuition is heavily subsidised by Aberdeenshire Council. The Council therefore has a policy of charging parents/guardians a moderate annual fee, payable in 4 equal termly instalments. This fee represents a contribution towards the overall cost of tuition. Tuition is offered on an individual or group basis, and fees charged reflect this difference.

If tuition changes from group to individual (due to others dropping out), fees will only be increased to the individual rate at the start of the following term. Fees can be paid online, by phone or post. Paying online is the most cost effective way to collect fees, so we strongly advise/request that all contributors pay online to help keep costs, and therefore future fees, down. In some circumstances pupils may be exempt from fees.

To see the latest fees please log follow the link below:-

<https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/schools/ims/music-tuition/instrumental-music-service-charges-and-conditions/#Fees>



Physical Education

The department of Physical Education in The Gordon Schools offers a width of curricular and extracurricular activities that are the match of any school in Scotland. From team games to co-operative activities, from competitive situations to shared learning, indoors and outdoors, involving boys and girls, programmes are as exciting as they are varied. Our games hall and gymnasium, our grassed playing fields, our all-weather pitch and our local swimming pool provide a fine blend of facilities matched with the best of teaching.

There are of course necessary rules, safeguards and equipment. Some advice is necessary.

Indoor and Outdoor Activities

For indoor and outdoor activities a complete change of clothing is required, including appropriate footwear and a towel.

Outdoor activities take place regardless of the weather. Therefore a change of clothing is **absolutely essential**, as is a towel.

For outdoor activities in winter pupils may wear jogging suits, but they must be part of their change of clothing and must not be worn for the rest of the school day.

If a pupil has an indoor and outdoor activity during the same week and has only one pair of suitable footwear, he or she must ensure that the soles of their shoes are cleaned before being worn indoors. This request is made in order to protect floors from dirt and also to protect the feet of those pupils who choose to work in bare feet for certain indoor activities.

Equipment

Girls

T-shirt or polo shirt
Shorts or tracksuit trousers
Trainers
Swimsuit

Optional extras:

Sweatshirt for cold weather
Dancing pumps
Spikes

Boys

T-shirt or polo shirt
Shorts or tracksuit trousers
Trainers
Swimming trunks

Optional extras:

A school rugby top (can be bought from the school)
Rugby socks (can be bought from the school)
Spikes
Football boots
Sweatshirt for cold weather

Pupils without kit

It is expected that pupils who come for a Physical Education lesson without the appropriate kit will wear the kit that is available in the department of Physical Education. This kit is clean and is laundered after each wearing.

Pupils excused Physical Education

To be totally excused from a Physical Education lesson, pupils should provide a note from their parent or guardian asking that they be excused from a lesson. If a pupil has a problem that requires them to be excused PE for more than 3 lessons, then a medical certificate or doctor's letter is required. Pupils who wish to be excused from swimming should bring PE kit with them.



Homework and Revision

In The Gordon Schools we believe that an organised approach to regular homework and revision is vital to academic progress. Although different subjects have different methods and requirements, it is important that parents and pupils should have some general guidelines on the amount and nature of homework and revision expected of pupils at the various stages of their school career. Specific homework tasks and regular revision both help pupils to deepen their understanding of subjects. They help improve on work done in class. They develop and reinforce important habits of self-discipline and self-study. Working on our own is something we all have to do. Generally, the amount of time required for homework and revision will build up as pupils move through school, but for all pupils some weeks will be busier than others, as they revise for tests or study for national examinations.

A wide range of departments organise lunchtime advice sessions for pupils, to help them with their coursework and assignments. The school Library is open every day at intervals and lunchtimes and for seniors at study time.

Homework can take a number of forms:

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| * completion of exercises or projects begun in class | * revision of work done in class |
| * special assignments such as note-taking, essays, reports or interviews | * long term projects |
| * preparation for forthcoming lessons | * background reading |
| * private visits to museums, libraries, events and performances. | |

A good piece of homework is one that pupils have:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| • given their full attention to | • presented well |
| • done to the best of their ability | • handed in on time |
| • checked for careless errors. | |

How can parents help?

It is vital that parents help their son or daughter to develop good study habits. School planners are given to all pupils to help them to plan their study. In the planner, diary pages are laid out in a weekly, double-page format. Pupils are given a school calendar showing key dates. They are also provided with a range of information leaflets, for example the extra-curricular activities leaflet which sets out days dates and times of activities. At home, a warm, quiet part of the house should be made available, if possible, for homework and revision, where youngsters can study without interference or interruption. Care should be taken to ensure that time is balanced between work set for the following day and more extensive assignments set for a week or more later. There should be encouragement to keep notes in good order, to store books and jotters carefully and to check timetables the evening before, to see that appropriate books, materials and equipment are packed ready for the following day. Always remember, even when your son or daughter does not have a specific homework task to complete there is always a need for revision of work carried out that day or week. Encouraging your son or daughter to follow a regular plan of revision will prove invaluable in maximising performance in classwork and will also go a long way to ensuring success in examinations.

Advice given to pupils about using study planners

The study planner is a most important aid to schoolwork. There is ample space for writing up homework and revision. Pupils are expected to carry their planner each day and to use it in each lesson. It has proved to be invaluable for study leading to examinations. Parents are asked to check this planner, to see that it is up-to-date and being used regularly. Pupils are given the following advice about using planners:

- Bring the planner to school every day.
- Write down the homework under the day you have to hand it in.
- Check your planner every night.
- Tick the homework after you have done it.
- Get someone at home to check your homework with you.
- Get an adult to sign your planner once a week.

The Library Resource Centre

The Library Resource Centre supports learning and teaching across the curriculum and is used extensively by staff and pupils. Pupils of all ages are encouraged to take advantage of the resources available for schoolwork, recreation and personal development.

The library is open during class time for individual pupil and class use. It is used for borrowing/returning books, researching using books and/or computers and for class or group activities. In addition, senior pupils use the library for timetabled as well as optional study periods. There are 4 computers and 8 laptops, all of which can be booked, in advance, by staff and pupils

The library has an extensive range of fiction, split in to 3 sections; Junior, Young Adult and Senior, catering for all ranges of interest and ability including those studying Advanced Higher English. The non-fiction section includes general interest books as well as those supporting school subjects. This section is supplemented by the cross-curricular resources Issues Today (suitable for younger pupils) and Issues/Issues Online. Issues Online can be used at home as well as in school. Details on how to access this resource are available in the library.

A Study Support section caters for senior pupils with information on study skills and techniques, study sheets provided by departments as well as other related topics such as coping with stress and other teenage issues. The Careers Library is for use by all pupils and contains up to date information on, for example, possible occupations, college and university prospectuses, open days and writing CVs. The librarian also operates a Job Vacancy Bulletin mailing list. Regular updates on current opportunities in the area are e-mailed to any pupil with an interest in finding employment at present or in the future. Anyone who wishes to be added to the mailing list should speak to the librarian. All current information is also displayed on the Careers Noticeboard in the library. The library also houses a small Staff Section.

Pupils and staff have access to Aberdeenshire Libraries' full catalogue. This facility greatly increases the range and choice of resources for everyone. In addition, inter-library loans for senior pupils can be arranged from Aberdeen University.

All S1 pupils complete a library skills course to introduce them to finding information in the library, but information literacy skills are developed over a period of time, therefore any pupil who would like some help with their research skills should speak to the librarian.

Although closed at interval, the library opens before registration at 8.30 am and at lunchtime from 1.30 – 2 pm, for pupils to use computers, finish homework, read newspapers, books, play board games or simply “chill out”. The librarian runs a reading club which meets at 1.15 pm on Thursdays. Members, in S1 -3, follow the Grampian Children's Book Award, reading and reviewing the shortlisted books and taking part in the competitions. The group will also attend the award ceremony, held in May each year at Aberdeen University along with pupils from other schools in Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen and Moray. Any group in the school is welcome to use the library's facilities at lunchtime for clubs or meetings. At the beginning of the new academic year, the library, in conjunction with Health and Wellbeing, hosts an Activities Fair and publishes a booklet listing all the activities pupils can take part in during their time at The Gordon Schools.

The Careers office is situated beside the library.

Equal Opportunities

Staff and pupils in The Gordon Schools place great importance on efforts to develop an awareness of the concepts of equal opportunities in respect of gender, race and special educational needs.



School Statement on Equal Opportunities

It is felt essential that girls and boys should have equal access to all curricular and careers programmes. It is felt essential for our school to make all practical efforts to redress inequalities by promoting good classroom practice and by making appropriate administrative arrangements. The aim of this is to endeavour to foster the talents of all pupils, by creating in them a greater appreciation of their potentialities in our changing social and occupational world.

Fifth and Sixth Year Induction programme

As pupils enter Fifth and Sixth Year the nature of the relationship between the pupil and the school alters. Pupils in S5/6 have made the active choice to return to school, to use their time to gain the best and most appropriate qualifications and experiences for the future. Our school also recognises the growing maturity of senior pupils and is keen that they are encouraged to take on greater responsibility within the school system, both for their own development and in helping others. To assist with this time of transition the school is developing a comprehensive induction programme. This will take place over two days in June.

Induction is designed to include team-building activities. Perhaps in S5 and S6 find themselves in classes with pupils from another year group, working in closer collaboration with others. This is also a time when members of the management and Guidance teams work closely with pupils to firm up course choice. Faculty Heads of each department in school present more detailed information about the requirements of courses selected. Pupils are given advice about forward planning for homework, self study and course assessment. Induction also presents an opportunity to highlight extra-curricular experiences open to S5/6 pupils, such as the Prefect system, Jasmine Challenge, the Buddy System, Paired Reading to support junior readers and acting as a supporter in the curriculum in junior classes. Advice is also given about sporting, musical and dramatic activities. S5/6 pupils are encouraged to think about taking on greater responsibilities. They enter also into a form of agreement with the school for the year.

Choice of Course

Pupils in S5 and S6 prepare for Scottish Qualifying Authority examinations, choosing from a wide variety of courses and subjects. Our school provides a full range of courses, with a number of options at national 4/5, Higher and Advanced Higher levels. Internet-based distance learning programmes are used by some of our senior students in their study time and in Advanced Higher lessons, linked to University tutors. All of this is set out in a detailed advice booklet for senior students. Further advice is available from Guidance Staff and our school office on Higher School and Further Education Bursaries.

Responsibility and Leadership

We are conscious in The Gordon Schools that education is about much more than academic qualifications. It is also about the development of skills and qualities that will help a young person to contribute to society and to make her or his way in their world. One of the most important sets of qualities we can develop in our young people are those associated with the skills of leadership and responsibility. To this end we have an extensive and carefully thought out Prefect system. This begins with responsibility given to pupils through the pupil representative council. Pupils are also trained to act as guides during our open evenings for parents, such as the P7 Introductory Evening.

The post of Prefect is open to all students in 5th and 6th year. Each session applications for the post are invited. Those who apply complete an application form and are interviewed against a set of essential and desirable criteria to determine success. From this Prefect grouping are elected our Captains, our Vice-Captains. Pupils can also apply to be Sports Captains and House Captains. They are selected for interview. Advice and support is offered to both successful and unsuccessful candidates. We feel that this process is important for two reasons. First, it is very good experience for the young people themselves. Many of them comment on how much better prepared they feel to face similar processes in the future. Second, over the years it has produced a fine set of young people, aware of their responsibilities and committed to the tasks that lie ahead of them.

During the session Prefects organise a wide variety of activities within school, including Christmas dances and regular discos, inter-House games, sports and fund-raising events. They are involved in supporting junior pupils through the Buddy System and by acting as Curriculum Supporters.

Many and varied opportunities are open to our fifth and sixth. To accept this responsibility is one of the many challenging experiences on offer to S5/6 pupils.

Information about the 2009 Additional Support for Learning Act

Legal information

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 came into force in November 2005. In June 2009, the Act was amended. These amendments form the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009 and it comes into force on 14 November 2010.

What does this mean for pupils and parents?

The new Act doesn't change the basic purpose of the 2004 Act – it aims to strengthen some duties under the Act and clarify parts that have been confusing.

Here are some of the main changes:

- Under the 2004 Act 'additional support' means support that is provided in a classroom or a school. The 2009 Act changes this to include support that is given out of school but that helps a child get the most out of their school education. This could include a social worker helping a child who refuses to go to school or a mental health nurse supporting a child to cope with issues affecting their school life.
- Children who are looked after by a local authority will automatically be assumed to have additional support needs. For looked after children who don't need extra help this will have little impact. For those who do need help it will make sure their needs are considered as they move through school or if they change school. Local authorities will also be expected to check whether these children require a Co-ordinated Support Plan (CSP) or not.
- The 2009 Act allows parents to ask their local authority for a specific type of assessment at any time. Under the 2004 Act parents had this right only when asking the education authority to identify whether their child had additional support needs or when asking the education authority whether their child required a CSP.
- The duties that local authorities have towards young disabled children have been strengthened. Under the new Act local authorities have a duty to assess disabled children aged between 0 and 3 and provide them with additional support, if required, in agreement with their parents.
- Local authorities will have to publish information on where parents and carers can find help, information and advice, including contact details for Enquire. Local authorities will have to make sure that a summary of this information (including details of dispute resolution and mediation services) is available from all schools (and other sites that provide education). They also need to make sure this information is included in school handbooks and on their website.
- There is a section about placing requests that states that parents of children with additional support needs, (including those that have CSPs) can make placing requests to any school in Scotland including schools outside of the local authority area they live in.
- All appeals about placing requests to special schools (whether the child has a CSP or not) will be referred to the Additional Support Needs Tribunal. Some of the changes made in the 2009 Act deal specifically with children who have, or may require a CSP, and in particular to disagreements between local authorities and parents about the CSP.
- The Act extends the reasons that a parent or young person can make a referral (called a reference) to the Additional Support Needs Tribunal. Parents can make a referral when a local authority decides that a child does not need a CSP but also when local authorities have: failed to provide the additional support set out in the CSP; not responded to a parent's request to find out whether their child needs a CSP within a given time; or, after having said they will consider whether a CSP is required have not made a decision (within a given time) on whether the child needs a CSP or not.
- The Act also gives the Additional Support Needs Tribunal extra powers to force local authorities to provide, or make arrangements providing additional support that is set out in a CSP if they have not done so.
- The new Act includes a duty for the Scottish Government to fund a national independent advocacy service (on request and free of charge) to support parents and young people in Additional Support Needs Tribunal proceedings.

The above points do not include all the changes resulting from the 2009 Act but simply cover the main points. Throughout the summer Enquire will be changing all their guides and fact sheets to take account of the 2009 Act.

If you have any questions about the 2009 Act

Please contact the Enquire Helpline on 0845 123 2303 or by email on info@enquire.org.uk

Information about the 2009 Additional Support for Learning Act

Scottish education law outlines a framework for children to be supported to make sure they benefit from education and reach their full potential.

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 outlines how to meet the needs of children who require additional support to ensure they can make the most of their education. Amendments were made to this act in 2009, which became law in November 2010.

“The Act aims to ensure that all children and young people are provided with the necessary support to help them work towards achieving their fullest potential. It also promotes collaborative working among all those supporting children and young people and sets out parents’ rights within the system.”
(Supporting children’s learning code of practice 2010)

Under this law, any child who needs more or different support to what is normally provided in schools or pre-schools is said to have ‘additional support needs’.

Children may need extra help with their education for a wide variety of reasons. A child’s education could be affected by issues resulting from:

- social or emotional difficulties
- behavioural difficulties
- problems at home
- bullying
- being particularly gifted
- a sensory impairment or communication problem
- a physical disability
- being a young carer or parent
- moving home frequently
- having English as an additional language.

It is not possible to list all the reasons because it will always depend on the individual child. What is important is that many circumstances may affect children’s ability to learn. So support may need to come from health, social work or certain voluntary organisations, as well as from education. Professionals with different areas of expertise should all work together to make sure any support your child gets is properly tailored to their individual needs.

Your child’s needs may last a short time, and the problem may be resolved easily. Or their needs might be very complex, and they may require additional support for a number of years.

Whatever your child’s needs, everyone involved should try to identify them as early as possible and provide the necessary support in a way that does not make your child feel singled out.

What are additional support needs?

The law says that a child or young person may have additional support needs if they are unable to benefit from their school education without help beyond what is normally given to children or young people of the same age. Your child may need additional support at any time during their school life, from the age of three when they start pre-school education. They may also need additional support to help them prepare for pre-school or school.

Why children may have additional support needs

It is not possible to list all the circumstances that may mean a child needs additional support because every child is different. Circumstances that disrupt one child’s learning could have little or no effect on the learning of another.

The following are some examples of situations that may give rise to additional support needs. However, these are a guide only. As a parent, you will know your child better than anyone else and understand when they may be having difficulties.

The learning environment is not appropriate for a child’s individual needs

It may be that what is being taught, or the way it is being taught, is not suitable for your child. The materials used may be inaccessible to them. Perhaps the physical environment, e.g. the way the classroom or school is laid out, is not giving your child the best chance of success.

A child who is more able may need a more challenging curriculum in order to make progress. A child whose first language is not English may also need additional support to access the curriculum.

Family circumstances are affecting a child’s ability to learn

Children’s progress at school is influenced by what is happening at home. If their home life is disrupted in any way, this may affect their ability to benefit from school education. Examples include children who are affected by family breakdown, who are homeless or move home often, who are helping to care for parents or siblings with health problems or disabilities, or who have become parents themselves. All looked after children are considered to have additional support needs, unless assessments find that support is not needed.

The child has a disability or health need

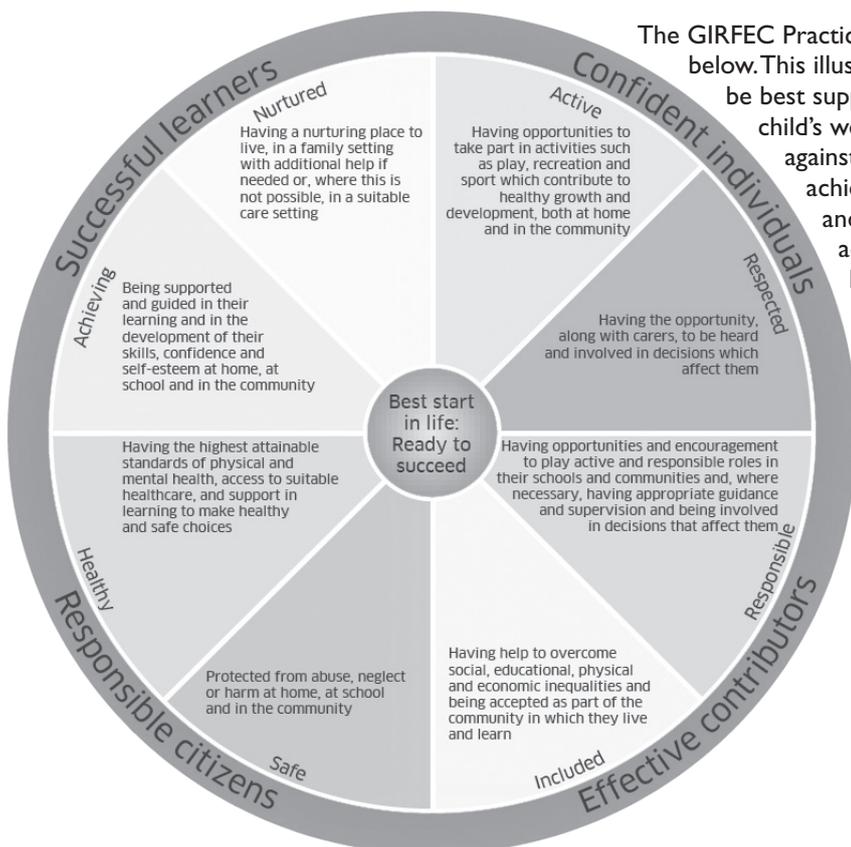
Children are likely to need additional support at school if they have motor or sensory impairments (e.g. difficulty with movement or sight), specific language impairments, autistic spectrum disorder, learning or attention difficulties or a debilitating illness. Mental health problems such as depression or eating disorders can also affect children’s ability to learn. A child is experiencing social or emotional problems

Children may also need additional support if they have been bereaved, have missed a lot of school for whatever reason, are being bullied or are bullying, are experiencing racial discrimination or displaying behavioural difficulties. Children who misuse drugs or alcohol are also likely to need support to access education.

Remember the above is not meant to be a complete list — a child may need additional support at any time and for any length of time.

Getting it right for every child

In Scotland a national programme called Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) aims to improve outcomes for all children and young people. The GIRFEC method supports three initiatives to help children’s well-being and learning — Equally Well, The Early Years Framework and Achieving our Potential (for more information on these see the Scottish Government website www.scotland.gov.uk). It encourages professionals to make judgements based on the best relevant information, and supports appropriate early intervention. GIRFEC’s approach should be reflected in all Government policy documents and initiatives affecting children and young people.



The GIRFEC Practice Model contains the well-being wheel shown below. This illustrates the main ways in which children can be best supported to ensure their overall well-being. A child’s well-being and other outcomes can be assessed against the eight indicators in this wheel: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. For all children and young people to achieve their potential and become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens — the aim of Curriculum for Excellence — they must each be helped to achieve the best they can according to these eight indicators. You can find out more about Getting it right for every child on the Scottish Government website - www.scotland.gov.uk/gettingitright. You can find information about Curriculum for Excellence from your child’s school, Parentzone, Learning Teaching Scotland and the Scottish Government.

Additional Support for Learning

A child or young person is said to have 'additional support needs' if they need additional support with their education. Additional support can mean any kind of educational provision that is more than, or very different from, the education that is normally provided in mainstream schools.

A child or young person may need additional support for a number of different reasons, for example:

- Difficulties with mainstream approaches to learning
- Disability or health needs, such as motor or sensory impairment, learning difficulties or autistic spectrum disorder.
- Family circumstances e.g. young people who are carers or parents.

The Additional Support for Learning Team serves the needs of pupils across the Children's Support Network, within The Gordon Schools and all of our associated Primary Schools. Some members of the team work in both Primary and Secondary school. The team work very closely especially during transition.

Roles of Additional Support for Learning Teachers

Additional Support for Learning Teachers are subject teachers who have undergone additional training to enable them to:

- Identify and assess pupils with additional support needs
- Support the teaching and learning of pupils across the mainstream curriculum

These roles are carried out in a number of ways:

- By teaching alongside class teachers
- By looking at a pupil's work
- By talking with parents
- By looking at learning materials and evaluating their accessibility
- By working closely with Guidance staff
- By talking to class teachers
- By providing tutorial support to individual pupils or small groups, where appropriate
- By linking with agencies such as the Sensory Impairment Service, NHS, Social Work, Community Education or Psychological Services
- By delivering and contributing to on-going staff development

Pupil Support Assistants

- ensure care, health, wellbeing and safety of pupils
- Support for learning and teaching activities
- Promotion of positive behaviour
- Assist in the organisation, preparation and use of resources



Inclusion and Curricular Provision

In line with Aberdeenshire and National guidelines, we aim to give our pupils a broad and balanced curriculum in an inclusive setting. Additional Support for Learning Teachers and auxiliary staffing allows for support to be targeted where necessary throughout the school. Pupils work at their own level in mainstream classes.

Additional Support for Learning Facilities and Specialist Provision

The Additional Support for Learning Team has staff who have been trained for more specialised roles. These include supporting pupils with specific learning difficulties, severe and complex needs, Autism, and social, emotional or behavioural difficulties. The department has excellent accommodation which includes a technology room in the heart of the school for pupils with specific learning difficulties, a double classroom to meet the needs of children in mainstream who may require individual or group support and a series of rooms in the Deveron Building for those who require a higher level of support, quiet space and time out from mainstream classes and a safe haven for vulnerable pupils during break and lunchtimes. In the Deveron Building, there is a small kitchen, a sensory stimulation area and a large disabled toilet/changing room has been built and has a ceiling-tracking hoist for lifting.

The Additional Support for Learning department has very good resources in information and communications technology, in the form of computers and software, to assist pupils with their written work. Pupils will learn to use computers, scanners and Adobe Professional software to create their own worksheets that can be read back to them where necessary using the text to speech software, Read and Write Gold 8. Some pupils may also be provided with portable word processing equipment, following assessment by the Additional Support for Learning teaching staff. More advanced ICT equipment can also be provided by ASPECTS, Aberdeenshire's technology support service for pupils.

HOW ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING CAN HELP

- We can listen to problems concerning a child's learning.
- We can pass appropriate information to class teachers.
- We can use a variety of approaches to support your child.
- We can advise about strategies to use at home.

Psychological Services

Mrs Helen MacKay, our school Educational Psychologist is in school on a regular basis, working with pupils and their families through individual referral.

Appointments

Appointments can be made to talk with Additional Support for Learning Team members at any Parent's Evening. Parents with concerns about their child's progress can also contact the Principal Teacher of Guidance who will arrange a meeting with Mrs Donna Harper, Principal Teacher, Additional Support for Learning.

Positive Behaviour In The Gordon Schools

A positive ethos with good behaviour is essential if The Gordon Schools is to meet its aims. It is also central to our ability to go about daily business in a manner that recognises that the school is a community based on trust, involving the mutual respect of pupils, staff and parents.

Principal elements of the Positive Behaviour Policy

There are four principal elements of the Positive Behaviour Policy in The Gordon Schools:

- High expectations of good behaviour.
- Praise for pupils who strive to improve, consistently meet or exceed expectations.
- Support through a discipline system for pupils who fall short of these expectations.
- The development of a partnership between teachers, pupils and parents.

Expectations of pupils

Pupils are expected to play their part in making our school a safe place to be, by behaving responsibly in classrooms, corridors, cafeteria, bus turning area and our school campus. Pupils are asked to:

- Read notices and obey them.
- Listen to and follow instructions of staff.
- Show safe conduct in the corridors, around the school and on school transport.
- Walk in the corridors at all times and not run.
- Eat food where it is purchased in the cafeteria and milk bar and not carry food into the corridors.
- Use litter bins in and around the school.
- Remain on the ground floor before registration, at intervals and lunchtimes.
- Follow staff advice in the bus park during the Fire Drill and Snow Closure procedures.
- Pay close attention at all times, be aware of rules and expectations and know what to do.

Praise System - Informal Praise

Teachers use their professional judgement when operating a praise system in the classroom. Praise may involve a verbal acknowledgement, a written comment on a piece of work, stars or ticks. Overall verbal praise and maintaining good working relationships remain paramount.

Praise System – Formal Praise

Teachers praise pupils at a school level for consistency, meeting expectations or going beyond these expectations in their work, behaviour or attitude. Teachers give pupils a form to take home that shows why this is deserved.

The Gordon Schools operates a House Points System whereby staff may issue pupils with a merit stamp in their planners. Each merit issued MUST be recorded on SEEMIS each month, stamp totals are calculated and the House which has received most merit points (stamps) is announced as “House of the Month”.

The House which has received the most merit points at the end of the academic year will receive the “House of the Year” award and this will be recognised at the annual Prize-Giving ceremony.

The pupil who has received the most merit points will receive the “Merit Pupil of the Year” award which will also be recognised at the annual Prize-Giving ceremony.

Consistency and fairness in issuing Merit stamps is essential. Staff should use the following criteria:-

- Improvement in behaviour and/or attitude
- Quality work
- Excellent individual Achievement
- Support for the school

Each and every pupils of TGS is expected to act as worthy ambassadors of the school.

Staged Intervention - Discipline Referral System

Staff in The Gordon Schools insist on a high standard of behaviour in order that good teaching and learning can flourish in a safe and healthy environment. We cannot stress too strongly the need for the involvement, support and co-operation of parents and carers at an early stage in this process.

While our aim is to support our young people and help them with any problems they may have, we have a range of sanctions that are applied in the best interests of each young person. These include detention at interval, lunchtime or after school, special assignments, or withdrawal of privileges.

If, however, any of our pupils demonstrate that, despite all the support we can offer, they are not willing to stay within our code of behaviour, then, in the best interests of the whole school community, they will be excluded. In certain cases, where it is deemed to be appropriate, parental support will be sought to refer the pupil to an Education Psychologist or to the Social Work Department.

Pre-Level 1

At this stage, informal action takes place. This is in keeping with a philosophy of supporting pupils to show they can improve their conduct. A warning is clearly given that, should misbehaviour continue, a pupil will be placed on discipline level 1.

Level 1

For more serious but still minor disruption, or where pupils have had the chance and not improved, it is appropriate to move on to a formal level. At this stage the teacher completes a Discipline Referral Form at level 1, noting the reason for referral and the action taken. This is passed to the appropriate Depute Rector responsible for that particular year group, before being posted home.

Level 2

Where the disruption is more serious or where pupils have not responded to level 1 support, then the involvement of a third party is necessary. This is usually the Principal Teacher of a subject department. The Principal Teacher completes a Discipline Referral Form at level 2 and takes appropriate action. The Discipline Referral Form is passed to the appropriate Depute Rector for that particular year group, before being posted home.

Level 3

If the Principal Teacher feels that their earlier intervention is not bringing about an improvement in behaviour, or if the incident is a particularly serious one, then referral at level 3 may be necessary. The Principal Teacher completes the 'reason for referral' part of the Discipline Referral Form and the Depute Rector takes appropriate action. This may include senior management team detention. The appropriate Depute Rector for that particular year group liaises with Principal Teacher of Guidance and parents or carers. This may be by telephone, in writing or at interview in school.

Pre Exclusion Level

A pupil who has been supported at all levels and does not respond, is dealt with by the appropriate Depute Rector for that particular year group. A similar process to level 3 is followed. The pupil is formally cautioned that he or she is courting a period of temporary exclusion from school. The Depute Rector directly contacts parents or carers over the matter.

Exclusion Level

The appropriate Depute Rector and the Principal Teacher of Guidance both deal with issues at this stage. Investigations are conducted. A full review of the disciplinary record up to that point is conducted. The Rector, or in his absence the Depute Rector, makes the final decision regarding a period of temporary exclusion from school. Authority guidelines are then followed.

The aim of all disciplinary procedures is to maintain and insist on a standard of conduct that allows good teaching and effective learning to proceed.

Anti-bullying Initiatives: Advice for Parents

Bullying is wrong. Nobody has the right to hurt other people by hitting them, calling them names, sending threatening text messages or e-mails, Facebook, spreading rumours or by doing anything else which is intended to be upsetting. Whichever form it takes, bullying can have the effect of frightening the victim, making him or her feel extremely unhappy and powerless. It is always unacceptable.

At The Gordon Schools we are aware that bullying exists, as in every other school, but we aim to minimise it. We expect our young people to develop their talents and abilities to the greatest extent possible and we recognise that this should occur in a happy and secure environment.

Bullying should not be ignored. In Personal and Social Education pupils are encouraged to participate in anti-bullying activities which raise anti-bullying awareness and strategies. Pupils are encouraged to talk to someone they trust such as a teacher, parent or friend. In The Gordon schools we have an Anti-Bullying Awareness week and special assembly. Senior Buddies meet weekly with younger peers to support them in all ways. Parents are always made aware of anti-bullying issues and what they can do. Their concerns are dealt with quickly and effectively by our Guidance Team. Parents are informed of incidents of bullying involving their child.

How can parents recognise bullying?

Parents must trust their instincts. Any change in a child's behaviour may be worth following up. If you are worried, discuss your worries in a frank way with your youngster. Things to look out for include:

- a reluctance to go to school
- asking to be driven to school
- school work deteriorating
- clothes or books torn or damaged
- unexplained bruises or scratches
- becoming withdrawn
- having nightmares
- developing headaches or stomach pains
- coming home hungry (dinner money taken)

Of course, however difficult it is for parents to accept, your child might not be the victim, but the bully.

What should parents do?

- In the first instance, encourage your child to talk about the bullying, but be prepared to accept that he or she might not want to confide in you.
- It is perfectly natural that you might feel anger that your child is being bullied. Don't rush to confront the child who is bullying your son or daughter, or their parents. Arguments between parents usually make the situation worse, rather than better.
- Give your child appropriate advice. Telling a child to hit back seldom works. It can often result in counter claims. Telling a child to ignore those who are teasing and taunting does not deal with the problem. Repeated taunts cannot simply be ignored.
- Work with the school to reinforce the message that bullying is always unacceptable and that it will not stop until people feel free to talk about incidents of bullying.
- Contact the school if you suspect that bullying is taking place. Ask to speak to your child's Guidance teacher, or, if he or she is not available, then to a member of the senior management team.

What will the school do?

- treat matters seriously
- reassure the child that talking to staff is the right course of action
- investigate the incident fully, talking to everyone involved
- take action to stop the bullying, including giving out punishments if the school discipline code has been broken
- use discretion to decide when a conciliatory approach may be more effective
- make sure that both victim and bully know who to approach for help in the future
- inform parents of those involved
- make sure that everyone is aware of the consequences of bullying.

We aim to involve pupils, parents and staff, working together in a partnership against bullying.

Improving Attainment

We have been working hard as a school to help our pupils to achieve more. Good quality learning and teaching is at the heart of attainment and achievement. We carefully monitor each pupil's progress and ensure that the needs of pupils are central to all that we do. High quality in-service training and professional development of staff also focus on ways of providing high quality learning for young people. Praise slips are issued by staff to recognise pupil achievement. Attention has been paid to making sure that study planners are an effective part of the daily life and work of pupils. We have homework and study clubs and Easter revision sessions. Ultimately, all of this helps to improve the quality of teaching and learning and, of course, has an impact on examination results.

Skills Development Scotland (Based in Inverurie - 01467 623623)

Skills Development Scotland provides careers guidance services to schools. Pupils in S4, S5 and S6 can request an individual interview with the Careers Adviser Mrs Lisa O'Brien by completing a request questionnaire available from the school reception, or by opting in at the time of Careers Adviser group talks. Individual interviews are timetabled throughout the year. Parents are welcome to come to the interview or to discuss with the Careers Adviser the summary of guidance Career Plan that is given to each pupil following their interview. Careers Advisers are also available to give advice at parents' evenings. Pupils with additional support needs will also receive advice from Skills Development Scotland.

The input of Skills Development Scotland is negotiated with school staff to best meet the needs of pupils in the available time. Before the school leaving date, the Careers Adviser can arrange to meet leavers to assist and advise on job seeking. Pupils can continue to gain access to help offered by Skills Development Scotland after they have left school. Careers Advisers can assist them to reconsider career ideas, after the publication of examination results or following a period of employment or further education.



Costs (correct at time of print)

Although the information in this Handbook is correct at the time of printing, it may be that there will have to be changes made during the course of the session. Parents and carers will always be advised by letter or Newsletter if this occurs.

Home Economics and Hospitality

S1/2 Cooking and Fabric work	£30	
£30 due in September or 2 instalments of £15		I due in September I due in January

S3 Hospitality: Practical Cooking		
£50 due in September or 2 instalments of £25	£25	I due in September I due in January

S 4/5/6 Hospitality: Practical Cookery		
£60 due in September or 2 instalments of £30	£30	I due in September I due in January

Technological Education

S1 Technical Education	£10	(materials and printing for S1 & S2)
S3 Practical Metalwork	£15	(materials)
S3 Practical Woodwork	£15	(materials)
Senior Phase Practical Metalwork	£15	(materials)
Senior Phase Practical Woodwork	£20	(materials)

Art & Design

S1/2 Classes	£2
S3 Classes	£5
S5/6 N4/5/Higher Classes	£15
Advanced Higher Students	£15*

(*This includes Postage & Packaging for the return of SQA coursework)

There may be additional costs incurred for 6th year pupils for the presentation of folios to Colleges. The Art department can also order a range of Art materials for purchase by pupils.

Lockers

Lockers are provided to allow pupils to leave schoolbags and other items in a secure place. The period for reserving lockers has been extended beyond one session. This has proved to be very popular.

	Small	Large		
Locker hire for one year	£6	£9	+	£5 deposit
Locker hire for two years	£10	£16	+	£5 deposit
Locker hire for three years	£15	£25	+	£5 deposit
Locker hire for four years	£20	£30	+	£5 deposit

In order to increase the return rate of locker keys, a deposit of £5 per key is required.

This is returned at the end of the hire period, when the key is returned.

Bus Trips

A contribution towards the cost of the trip is asked for. This is subject to review each session.

Free School Meals

What are Free School Meals?

A Free School Meal is a school lunch provided free of charge by Aberdeenshire Council to children whose families meet the required criteria.

In a **Primary School**: The child/children receive the same dinner ticket as a paying pupil from the School office, this is then handed over at lunchtime giving the same choice from the daily menu.

In a **Secondary School**: The child/children receive a daily credit allowance in the schools cafeteria to be used at lunchtime, equivalent to the value of a two-course meal on items chosen off the menu. Further details are available from your child's / children's School Office.

Is my child entitled to a Free School Meal?

Free School Meals are linked to the level of benefit / income a family receives and will be provided if :-

- a family is in receipt of Income Support or Pension Credit. (Guarantee Credit)
- a family is in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance (Income-Based) or Income related Employment Support Allowance.
- a parent is receiving Child Tax Credit (CTC) but not Working Tax Credit and your annual income is less than £16,010*.
- a parent is receiving Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit and their annual income is less than £6420*.
- parents receive help under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- any person between the age of 16 to 18 years old in receipt of any of the benefits listed above is eligible to claim Free School Meals.

These figures are subject to change from the Inland Revenue but are correct at present.

Where can I obtain an Application Form from?

You can request an application form by calling the Benefits Section on 08456 08 01 49. Application forms are also available at your child's/children's school. Please note, if you apply for Housing/Council Tax Benefit, the application form will also be used to claim for free school meals – you will not be required to complete a separate form. If your child is entitled to free school meals, the Benefits Section will send you a letter confirming this. You can take this letter to the school to claim your free school meals. If you are not claiming Housing/Council Tax Benefit, the Benefits Section will also assess your entitlement to free school meals.

Do I have to provide any additional information along with my Application Form?

Proof of income must be produced along with the completed application form.

This can either be:-

- TC602 Tax Credit Award Notice for 2014/2015 from the Inland Revenue showing entitlement to Tax Credits.
- A letter from the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) confirming your entitlement to benefit.
- Confirmation of support from the National Asylum Support Service.

Who do I return the Application Form to?

Application Forms must be returned to; Aberdeenshire Council, PO Box 18533, Inverurie, AB51 5WX.

You can also return the form to your local Housing/Council Tax Benefit office, or to your child's/children's school.

What happens if my circumstances change?

If your circumstances change for any reason you must advise the Benefits Section immediately, by calling 08456 08 01 49 or by E-mail at benefits@aberdeenshire.gov.uk. If you receive a Free School Meal which you are not entitled to, you will be required to pay back that money.

It is your right to make an application if you meet any of the criteria. Aberdeenshire Council encourages ALL Parents of pupils who qualify, to apply for Free School Meals.

Who do I contact if I have a query?

If you have a query regarding Free School Meals, please contact the Benefits Section on 08456 08 01 49. Staff at your child's / children's school will also be able to offer you advice.

What happens to the information I give?

All information is treated in the strictest confidence and is only held by Aberdeenshire Council.

School Clothing Grants

Am I entitled to a School Clothing Grant?

School Clothing Grants will normally be made to parents / guardians in receipt of the following:-

- Income Support (IS)
- Income based Job Seeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Any income related element of Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (but not Working Tax Credit) and their annual income is less than £15,860 (with effect from April 6, 2011)
- If a parent is receiving both maximum Child Tax Credit and maximum
- Working Tax Credit and their annual income is less than £6,420 (with effect from April 6, 2011).

You may also be eligible if you are an asylum seeker receiving support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999. Contribution based job seekers allowance is not an eligible criteria for School Clothing Grants

How old does my child have to be?

Clothing grants are available for all school aged children from Primary 1 upwards from the time they start at an Aberdeenshire Council School until they reach their official leaving date.

Where can I obtain a School Clothing Grant Application Form?

If you are claiming housing and/or council tax benefit, you are not required to complete a separate application form. We will contact you directly about a school clothing grant. The information you have already supplied will be used to assess your entitlement for a school clothing grant. If we do require any further information we will write to you about this.

If you are not claiming housing / council tax benefit, you can obtain an application form at your child's school or by contacting your local benefit office as listed on the reverse of this leaflet.

Alternatively you can call the benefits section on 08456 08 01 49 or e-mail benefits@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

How much will be awarded?

At present an award of £50 per child is made per financial year (1 April to 31 March). The first School Clothing Grant payments are made on or around 20 August each year. Please note, no payments are made between 1 April and 20 August. If you apply between 20 August and 31 March, payments are made on a monthly basis and we will advise you of the payment date.

All payments are made direct to your bank account.

Do I have to give any additional information?

If you are not claiming housing / council tax benefit you will need to provide proof of your income with your application form.

If you are in receipt of any type of Tax Credits we will require a copy of your Tax Credit Award Notice. HM Revenue and Customs send this to you.

Do I have to purchase a school uniform?

Parents / guardians are strongly encouraged to purchase clothing which meets the schools dress code. Some items of school clothing can be purchased from your child / children's school.

Who do I send my completed application form to?

Completed application forms must be returned to the Benefits Section at the following address:

Aberdeenshire Council PO Box 18533 Inverurie AB51 5WX

Alternatively, you can submit your form to your local benefit office.

What happens to the information I give?

All the information you provide is treated with the strictest confidence and is only held by the benefits section. Original documentation which you provide with your application will be returned to you.

Transport

As with most rural schools, the catchment area for The Gordon Schools is wide and scattered, extending to ten miles north, five miles west and fourteen miles to the south-east. Transport arrangements are therefore elaborate and extensive. There are a large number of coaches, minibuses and taxis contracted to convey pupils to and from school. Some of these connect with other routes. Where transport has seatbelts, pupils must wear them. While the school will encourage the use of seatbelts it is the responsibility of pupils and parents to ensure that they are worn. The behaviour of pupils on school transport is expected to be of the very best. Our school disciplinary sanctions apply on school transport and misbehaviour will result in normal disciplinary sanctions being enforced. Pupils travelling by bicycle must leave their cycles in the lockable cycle storage area at the gates in the bus park. It is the pupil's responsibility to secure their bicycle in the storage area.

Emergency Procedures, including Snowstorms

Every effort is made to maintain a full educational service. On some occasions circumstances arise which lead to disruption. Schools may be affected by severe weather, dislocation of transport, power failures or difficulties of fuel supply. The Rector has complete discretion to close the school in anticipated storm conditions that will put pupils at risk. In such cases we do all we can to let parents know about the details of closure and re-opening. Parents are kept in touch by using letters, by telephone, by the Internet on Aberdeenshire Council's website, by local radio and by Aberdeenshire's adverse weather telephone line. The Council website address is: www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk. Further details are in student planners.

Adverse weather telephone information line... What to do:

- Dial Aberdeenshire Council's access number **0870 054 4999**
- Enter The Gordon Schools' own pin number **021130**
- Press 1 to hear the school's message about adverse weather.

Adverse Weather Arrangements

In the event of severe snowstorms, emergency arrangements have been organised to ensure that all pupils get home safely or that they are looked after in temporary, alternative accommodation. These include the allocation of duties to Senior Staff and Guidance Staff, a Snowstorm Action Pack, Emergency Bus Lists and Emergency Address Cards. Please also note:

- If pupils have to be sent home early, parents on our *Priority Phonecall* list are informed beforehand. This list is kept for emergencies. Parents who wish to be included should contact the school office.
- Individual pupils must never leave the school without first obtaining permission from the office.
- It is important that pupils do exactly what the staff or the bus driver tells them to do.
- Parents are advised by letter, in September in the first term of each session, of *Snowstorm* emergency procedures. Special cards are issued to parents for them to complete and return to school. A practice is held for pupils in late autumn when internal procedures are checked and explained.

Safety of pupils in snowstorms - Authority advice for Parents

Parents and carers are reminded that they should:

- provide the school with information about emergency contacts that can be reached.
- keep the school office advised of any changes to this information.
- have an adverse weather emergency address.
- make sure that your child wears appropriate outdoor clothing throughout the winter.
- decide whether it is safe for your child to travel to school in adverse weather conditions.
- not take their son or daughter to school if transport is not running. This may cause problems later on.
- be aware that parents are responsible for their child's safety to and from the pick-up/drop-off point.
- **not** remove their child during adverse weather conditions, without first informing the school.

The need for such safety procedures is stressed here. This is underpinned by real care and concern by staff in school to make sure that pupils are never faced with dangers in transport. It is also important to note that large numbers of pupils travel each day to and from school in safety and comfort.

Application for transport

Pupils who live more than three miles from school are entitled to transport, as measured from the normal pick-up point. Others may be entitled on medical grounds or during the winter because they live in a particularly difficult and remote area. Application forms for transport are available in the school office and normally season tickets are issued. The Education Authority does not provide free transport for those pupils attending from out-of-zone on a placing request, although privileged places may be available.

Health Provision

Our school does all it can to make sure that pupils are active, healthy and enjoy good fitness. When pupils are unwell we make every effort to make sure that pupils are catered for. We try very hard to show care and concern for the welfare of each and every pupil.

The school regularly reviews all of its procedures relating to health provision and medical matters, to take account of Aberdeenshire policy. Forms dealing with the administration of medication are issued annually. All members of staff are issued with advice on medical matters. This includes a list of pupils who have a long-term medical condition.

No medication can be administered to a pupil under the age of sixteen years, without the written consent of a parent or guardian. It should be noted that school staff are unable to issue paracetamol or other non-prescribed medication to pupils. Advice on such matters as head lice and dysentery is available from our Community Support Health Worker.

First Aid is provided by the School Nursing Assistant. The school based Community Support Health Worker works alongside the Nursing Assistant, the School Doctor and other health professionals to support pupils.

The School Medical Officer visits the school on a regular basis and sees pupils with any medical, emotional or behavioural problems that may be affecting their educational progress. The School Nurse is involved in testing pupils' colour vision in first year and carries out an interview with all second year pupils, referring concerns to the School Doctor.

The School Health Service adheres to National recommendations. BCG immunisation to protect against TB is offered in second year by the School Health Team. Diphtheria, Tetanus and Polio boosters are offered in third or fourth year by the School Health Team, if not given by the GP. Other review examinations and appointments are arranged as necessary by the School Doctor. Information for parents is available in the leaflet Health Service for School Age Children issued by the School Health Service to all pupils in S1.

The school has been equipped to accommodate physically handicapped pupils, with ramps at all entrances. There is a lift to give access to the three-storey building in school.

Pupil Emergencies

When a pupil becomes ill at school, they see their Guidance teacher first. If required, the pupil is taken to the medical room. A note of this is kept by the school Nursing Assistant.

Parents, carers, or those who have indicated they are willing to act as an emergency contact are advised by telephone of illnesses in school. It is hoped that a suitable adult will

then come in to school to take the youngster home. If in real doubt about their son or daughter's health at the start of the school day, parents and guardians are advised to keep their youngster at home.

No pupil must ever leave school when ill, without permission. Pupils will be sent home only when an adult has arrived in school to accompany them. In the event of serious illness or accident, the school will contact parents and arrange for the pupil to be taken to hospital.

Parents' Responsibility

The school retains an emergency telephone contact for each pupil. This is particularly important in the case of a pupil with a known medical problem. Parents should inform the school when their child is suffering from any illness, whether short or long term. This information will be treated confidentially.

It is vital too, that parents keep the school fully informed of any changes in addresses or in information relating to emergency contacts.

Child Protection

Schools are required to report if we think any child has come to harm as a consequence of possible abuse. Each school now has a designated officer appointed to be responsible for child protection matters.

The school follows a set of Child Protection Guidelines. In situations where there is a possibility that a child could be at risk of abuse or neglect, the school is required to refer the child to Social Work, the Police or the Reporter to the Children's panel. Under these circumstances, parents or carers would not normally be consulted first.

Should parents or carers wish to talk further about child protection and the safety of children they should contact Mrs Carol Grant, Depute Rector.



Parent Forum and Parent Council

There is widespread agreement that the involvement of parents in the education of their children has a positive influence on children's learning. The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006 aims to make it easier to become involved in their own child's education and in their child's school more generally.

The Gordon Schools and Aberdeenshire Council work very hard to involve parents.

What the law says

The main aims of the Parental Involvement Act are to:

- help parents become more involved with their child's education and learning
- welcome parents as active participants in the life of the school
- provide easier ways for parents to express their views and wishes.

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

Parents have said they want good opportunities to express views, to raise issues that are important to them and their child, to get a proper response to requests and questions and to know more about what goes on in schools. The law is designed to make it easier for you to do all of this.

What does being a member of the Parent Forum mean?

All parents who have children in a school are automatically a part of the Parent Forum for that school. The Parent Forum has set up a Parent Council to represent them and act on their behalf.

As a member of the Parent Forum you can expect to:

- get information about what your child is learning
- get information about events and activities at the school
- get 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?

The role of the Parent Council will be to:

- support the school in its work with pupils
- represent the views of all parents
- encourage links between the school, parents, pupils, pre-school groups and the wider community
- report back to the Parent Forum.

Who are the members of The Gordon Schools Parent Council

Generally, members of the Parent Council must be parents of children who attend the school and the chairperson must have a child in the school. However, the Parent Council can decide to co-opt other members from teachers and the community who will have knowledge and skills to help them.

The Chair of our Parent Council is Mrs Fiona Alderson who can be contacted via The Gordon Schools.

What is the role of the Parent Council?

The detail of what a Parent Council does will be decided by parents, but the Act lays down certain functions which can be summarised as 4 broad areas:

- supporting the school in its work with pupils
- representing the views of parents
- promoting contact between the school, parents, pupils, providers of nursery education and the community
- reporting to the Parent Forum.

The Parent Council will also have a role in the appointment of headteachers and depute headteachers.

What is the role of the headteacher?

The headteacher should be present at Parent Council meetings, or be represented by another member of staff. The headteacher can be asked to give advice and information to the Parent Council on any school matter they are responsible for.

The headteacher is required to give a yearly report to the Parent Council on the performance of the school and on the objectives and ambitions for the school.

How will parents be supported?

The Gordon Schools and Aberdeenshire Council will support the involvement of parents:

- **at home** – e.g. by providing them with information on what their children are learning at school and how this can best be supported at home
- **through school** – e.g. by providing parents with opportunities to contribute to the life of the school
- **in a more formal way** – e.g. by helping them to decide what kind of parent group the school should have.

Parent Council Fundraising Group

We are fortunate in having a Fundraising Group which links to the Parent Council. The group raises money for the school, for instance by arranging social events and activities which both promote the involvement of parents as well as supporting the wider life of the school. Pupils benefit from money raised by the fundraising group.

The Chair of our Parent Council Fundraising Group can be contacted via The Gordon Schools.

Association of Former Pupils

The Former pupils' Association, which is well supported by the local communities, involves itself in fund-raising, for the school and charity.

The Association publishes an annual magazine, called 'The School Road', which is sent to former pupils all over the world. Social events are organised for the benefit former pupils and their guests. The Association holds bursaries and bequests in trust. These are allocated to pupils and former pupils by the committee of the Association, in consultation with the Rector and Guidance team.

Staff in The Gordon Schools are delighted to have the support and backing of such a positive organisation and we strongly encourage our school leavers to take up membership of the Association of Former Pupils.

Website link: www.thegordonschoolsfpa.co.uk



Important Addresses

Mr Ian Stirling,
Quality Improvement Manager,
Aberdeenshire Education & Children's Services,
Stonehaven Education Office,
Queen's Road,
STONEHAVEN, AB39 2QQ.
Tel: 01569 768497
Fax: 01569 768489

Mrs Maria Walker,
Director of Education & Children's Services,
Aberdeenshire Council
Woodhill House,
Westburn Road,
ABERDEEN, AB16 5GB.
Tel: 01224 665420
Fax: 01224 665445

Skills Development Scotland,
Unit 6,
Garioch Centre,
Constitution Street,
INVERURIE, AB51 4UY
Tel: 01467 623623
Fax: 01467 623624

Mr Vincent Docherty
Head of Service, Secondary
Education & Additional Support
Aberdeenshire Education and
Children's Services,
Woodhill House
Westburn Road,
ABERDEEN,
AB16 5GB.
Tel: 01224 664283
Fax: 01224 664615

Important Addresses - Associated Primary School

Mrs Kim Aplin, Head Teacher,
Cairney School, Cairnie,
HUNTLY, Aberdeenshire, AB54 4TQ.
Tel: 01466 760202

Mrs B Rae, Head Teacher (Acting),
Clatt School, Clatt
HUNTLY, Aberdeenshire, AB54 4NY
Tel: 01464 831243

Mrs Fiona Nicolson, Head Teacher,
Drumblade School, Drumblade,
HUNTLY, Aberdeenshire, AB54 6EQ.
Tel: 01466 740228

Mrs Muriel Matthew, Head Teacher,
Forgue School, Forgue,
HUNTLY, Aberdeenshire, AB54 6DQ
Tel: 01466 730232

Mrs Dawn Williams, Head Teacher,
Gartly School, Gartly,
HUNTLY, Aberdeenshire, AB54 4QA
Tel: 01466 720270

Mrs Trish McLellan, Head Teacher,
Glass School, Glass,
HUNTLY, Aberdeenshire, AB54 4YA
Tel: 01464 700210

Mr Paul Scrimshaw, Head Teacher,
Gordon Primary School,
HUNTLY, Aberdeenshire, AB54 4SE
Tel: 01466 792550

Mrs Allison Conner, Head Teacher,
Insch School, Alexander Street,
INSCH, Aberdeenshire, AB52 6JH
Tel: 01464 820252

Mr Annabel Ross, Head Teacher,
Kennethmont School, Kennethmont,
HUNTLY, Aberdeenshire, AB54 4NP
Tel: 01464 831226

Mrs Felicity Thow, Head Teacher,
Largue School, Forgue
HUNTLY, Aberdeenshire, AB54 6HS
Tel: 01464 871225

Mrs Liz Manley, Head Teacher,
Lumsden School, Lumsden,
HUNTLY, Aberdeenshire, AB54 4JR
Tel: 01464 861703

Mrs Sharon Huxtable, Head Teacher,
Oyne School, Oyne,
INSCH, Aberdeenshire, AB52 6QT
Tel: 01464 851232

Mrs Marsali Fraser, Head Teacher,
Premnay School, Premnay,
INSCH, Aberdeenshire, AB52 6QA
Tel: 01464 820201

Mrs Claire Conner, Head Teacher,
Rhynie School, Rhynie
HUNTLY, Aberdeenshire, AB54 4HD
Tel: 01464 861257

Educational Psychology Service

Aberdeenshire Educational Psychology Service bring psychology to the heart of learning and teaching, working with others to improve life experiences and outcomes for all children and young people.

The Educational Psychology Service provides a service across Aberdeenshire from pre-birth to 24 years old. We work with children, young people, families, educational staff, local authority colleagues and a wide range of other professionals including health professions, social work, early years partner providers and post school training and education providers.

To find out more about what we do, take a look at the Educational Psychology Service Plan 2014-15 which sets out our priorities for improvement over the coming year.

Educational Psychologists have skills in problem analysis and solution-focused discussion and apply their knowledge of psychology and child development to improve experiences, outcomes and opportunities for children and young people. We do this through:

- Consultation and working collaboratively with the people most closely involved with a particular issue. The aim is to explore the issue(s) and to collectively generate workable solutions.
- Gathering and analysing assessment information through consultation and making decisions about the need for any additional assessment information. Sometimes assessment can also involve observation, analysis of work, questionnaires, curriculum based assessment or dynamic assessment. The purpose of an assessment is to inform intervention.
- Facilitating discussion to agree appropriate interventions and next steps. An intervention is a strategy designed to overcome barriers to learning and teaching.
- Providing training for children and young people, parents, teaching staff and other professionals on a variety of topics.
- Carrying out research projects; for example writing up case studies, carrying out enquiries, evaluations and literature reviews on issues related to learning and teaching.

Contact Us

We have educational psychologists based in six office locations in Aberdeenshire.

Aberdeen	Fiona Yarrow Principal Educational Psychologist Woodhill House, Westburn Road Aberdeen, AB16 5GJ 01224 664272	Macduff	The Lodge Macduff School Berrymuir Road Macduff AB44 1PT 01261 831233
Fraserburgh	Dover Lodge 117 Charlotte Street Fraserburgh AB43 9LS 01346 515303	Peterhead	Buchan House St Peter Street Peterhead, AB42 1QF 01779 484205
Kintore	Craigearn Business Park Morrison Way Kintore AB51 0TH 01467 634759	Stonehaven	Stonehaven Education Office Queens Road Stonehaven AB39 2QQ 01569 764110

For general enquiries email: eps@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Educational Psychology Service - Information for Parents and Carers

Who are Educational psychologists?

The Educational Psychology Service is part of the Education, Learning and Leisure of Aberdeenshire Council.

Educational Psychologists normally have an honours degree in Psychology, a postgraduate degree in Educational Psychology and a background in working with children and young people.

They are trained to work in collaboration with school staff, parents/ carers and other professionals to help children and young people to achieve.

How does an Educational Psychologist become involved?

- If you have any concerns about your child it is best to share them with school staff first as many problems can be solved in school without the involvement of an Educational Psychologist.
- School staff will contact their named Psychologist if they feel that he or she might be able to help.
- You can contact the Educational Psychology Service directly if you would prefer.

What happens when an Educational Psychologist becomes involved?

- In the first instance, the Educational Psychologist will discuss the general issue relating to learning and teaching with school staff.
- Where the Psychologist becomes formally involved with a child/young person, parental permission is always required.
- If the Psychologist becomes formally involved, his or her assessment is likely to be based on information shared by those most closely involved with your child. This information will be shared during a consultation meeting, which will last around 40 minutes.
- This meeting will involve yourself, school staff, the Psychologist and any others who can helpfully contribute to this problem solving approach.
- It may be helpful for your child to attend the meeting, particularly if he or she is in secondary school.
- At the end of the meeting there will be an agreed plan of action.
- A written record of the meeting will be sent to you and others who were present.
- A follow-up consultation meeting may be held to review the success of the action plan and decide if any further action is needed.

Will the Educational Psychologist work directly with my child?

- Sometimes gathering information about your child may involve:
 - Observing your child in school or nursery
 - Looking at your child's school work
 - Playing with your child
 - Talking and listening to your child
 - Using assessment materials

How else might Educational Psychologists help?

- Sometimes the best way for Educational Psychologists to help is through less direct means such as:
 - Advice and training for school staff
 - Working closely with other professionals
 - Projects that help improve learning and teaching
 - Group work with pupils
 - Training projects for pupils
 - Workshops for parents

For more information contact us on 01224 664272 or email eps@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Quick Guide to our Complaints Procedure

Complaints procedure

You can make your complaint in person, by phone, by e-mail, via our website or in writing. We have a two-stage complaints procedure. We will always try to deal with your complaint quickly. But if it is clear that the matter will need a detail investigation, we will tell you and keep you updated on our progress.

Stage 1: frontline resolution

We will always try to resolve your complaint quickly, within **five working days** if we can. If you are dissatisfied with our response, you can ask us to consider your complaint at Stage 2.

Stage 2: investigation

We will look at your complaint at this stage if you are dissatisfied with our response at Stage 1. We also look at some complaints immediately at this stage, if it is clear that they are complex or need detailed investigation.

We will acknowledge your complaint within **three working days**. We will give you our decision as soon as possible. This will be after no more than **20 working days** unless there is clearly a good reason for needing more time.

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

If, after receiving our final decision on your complaint, you remain dissatisfied with our decision or the way we have handled your complaint, you can ask the SPSO to consider it. We will tell you how to do this when we send you our final decision.

Statistical Information

Each year the Scottish Executive Education Department publishes statistics about every school in Scotland. Summaries of these statistics are set out on the next three pages. Included in the sets of statistics are figures for the school roll, the staying on rate, examination results for fourth, fifth and sixth year students, attendance and absence figures, leaver destinations and budgeted running costs for The Gordon Schools.

Staff in The Gordon Schools have been commended in recent quality assurance visits by education officials for the ways in which senior staff and heads of department analyse statistics and for the action taken to make improvements in conditions for learning. Planning is carried through and development plans are set in motion, to make sure that the best kinds of educational arrangements are in place for all pupils.

Commitment to seeking high attainment

We are committed to seeking high attainment, encouraging all pupils to develop their potential. Staff in The Gordon Schools continue to work very hard to help all pupils to build up good sets of results in their examinations.

Many things contribute to this.

- We make every effort to ensure that the curriculum is appropriate for all ability levels and that good teaching and learning takes place.
- We make sure that there is a well-disciplined, hard working environment in our classrooms, based on the development of good relationships.
- Pupils are encouraged to be well motivated. We ask a lot of our students, seeking high standards in attainment.
- We work very hard to build an ethos of achievement, to make The Gordon Schools a place where each and every pupil wants to do well.

Standards and Quality Report and Improvement Plan

Each year, the Rector produces the Standards and Quality Report and the Improvement Plan which evaluates the previous academic year's performance and outlines plans for the following year. This is produced after clear auditing and evaluation procedures, including views of parents, pupils, staff and external agencies as appropriate. The full version of the document, which explains clearly our priorities is available from the school's website from September of each year.



*Examination Results (within Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework)
(2014/15 results update)*

School

Percentage cohort achieving;						
By end of S4	Literacy and Numeracy award at Level 4			5 or more awards at Level 5		
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
	69	86	80	31	44	40

Percentage cohort achieving;						
By end of S5	3 or more awards at Level 6			5 or more awards at Level 6		
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
	27	27	36	9	12	15

Percentage cohort achieving;						
By end of S6	5 or more awards at Level 6			1 or more awards at Level 7		
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
	23	28	23	18	18	17

Education Authority: Aberdeenshire

Percentage cohort achieving;						
By end of S4	Literacy and Numeracy award at Level 4			5 or more awards at Level 5		
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
	66	87	89	36	44	45

Percentage cohort achieving;						
By end of S5	3 or more awards at Level 6			5 or more awards at Level 6		
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
	31	33	38	13	16	18

Percentage cohort achieving;						
By end of S6	5 or more awards at Level 6			1 or more awards at Level 7		
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
	27	28	29	19	19	21

National Data

Percentage cohort achieving;						
By end of S4	Literacy and Numeracy award at Level 4			5 or more awards at Level 5		
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
	63	77	82	35	39	42

Percentage cohort achieving;						
By end of S5	3 or more awards at Level 6			5 or more awards at Level 6		
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
	30	33	37	13	17	18

Percentage cohort achieving;						
By end of S6	5 or more awards at Level 6			1 or more awards at Level 7		
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
	27	29	31	18	19	20

