

DUMFRIES LEARNING TOWN

*YOUR
QUESTIONS
ANSWERED*

If you have a question or would like to
add a question to these FAQs
please contact us on
schoolsforthefuture@dumgal.gov.uk

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

1. **How does the final DLT programme differ from what was originally proposed with a senior phase 'super school' at the Crichton campus?**

The Dumfries Learning Town (DLT) Project keeps all four of our secondary schools S1-S6. The additional learning zone referred to as the Bridge (formerly known as the Learning Hub) will work with predominantly senior phase pupils from the town and from other regional secondary schools where pupils wish to study a subject/course that is not viable in their own base school due to insufficient uptake. The College and University Partners that were identified as part of the Crichton Campus development are still part of the learning town and we will work with them in schools, at the Bridge and on their own sites as appropriate.

2. **What will DLT offer for Learners?**

The schools and learning partnerships will provide a vibrant and modern curriculum which ultimately equips our children and young people to meet the challenges of the 21st century through

- common timetables,
- shared resources,
- improved and extended facilities and
- increased aspiration.

One of the key aims of DLT is that no matter which school a Dumfries learner attends, he or she will have the same choices and high quality experiences. Each learner has a base school, but as he or she gets older, will have the chance to follow courses that may be offered in

- the base school,
- another school,
- the Bridge,
- the local FE College or
- the workplace.

3. **What is the timescale for this development?**

DLT is split over two key phases. We will start to see the completion of Phase 1 from the end of 2017 onwards. This will include St Joseph's College major redevelopment and Northwest campus (including Maxwelltown High School, Lochside and St Ninian's Primary Schools) with community facilities. In addition, the Northwest will include the integration of Langlands, a special secondary school catering for young people with severe and complex needs. The final site in Phase 1 is the Bridge that will include a space for some of the children who currently attend Elmbank School.

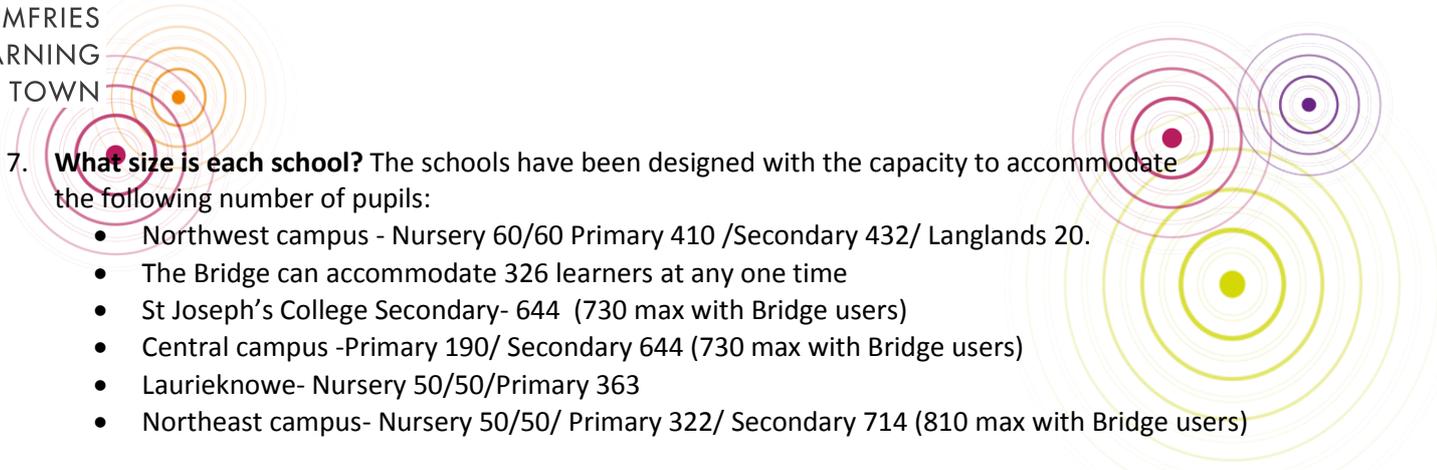
4. **What is the timescale for Phase 2 development?**

We will start to see completion of Phase 2 from the end of 2020 onwards. This will include Northeast campus, including Dumfries High School and Noblehill Primary School on one site. The Central campus will include Dumfries Academy and Loreburn Primary School coming onto one site and a new nursery/primary school build for Laurieknowe on the existing site.

5. **When will the build for the individual schools and the Bridge be completed?**

Exact dates for completion of the builds can change as the programme runs through a number of legal, financial and development timescales. These mirror statutory requirements and formal and informal engagement including engagement with teachers on the design and transition process into the new schools. We are working with a large number of local and national partners that impact on the programme.

6. **What will it cost and where is the money coming from?** The Dumfries Learning Town project has an estimated cost of £72 million to deliver both the building of the schools and the Bridge and the transition to a new whole town delivery of the curriculum. Dumfries and Galloway Council's capital programme is contributing £55 million towards the project and the Scottish Government is providing £17 million of grant funding.

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7. **What size is each school?** The schools have been designed with the capacity to accommodate the following number of pupils:
- Northwest campus - Nursery 60/60 Primary 410 /Secondary 432/ Langlands 20.
 - The Bridge can accommodate 326 learners at any one time
 - St Joseph's College Secondary- 644 (730 max with Bridge users)
 - Central campus -Primary 190/ Secondary 644 (730 max with Bridge users)
 - Laurieknowe- Nursery 50/50/Primary 363
 - Northeast campus- Nursery 50/50/ Primary 322/ Secondary 714 (810 max with Bridge users)
8. **Will each of the secondary schools have the full range of facilities?** Yes, each school will have the normal range of facilities and spaces that every six-year secondary school has. In addition to this, higher specification university and professional level – teaching facilities will be available to all Dumfries learners at the Bridge.
9. **What is going to be different about the way the Dumfries secondary schools work?** Collaboration not competition is key. All schools will benefit from working together to extend the opportunities available to all learners. The development of Burgh 'teams' will enable sharing and targeted innovation and reduce duplication. Sharing expertise and materials will ensure learners have access to the best possible resources.
10. **Doesn't effective collaboration and networking depend on schools having the same curricular structure, timetable and school day?**
In order to work together effectively and efficiently, schools will move to a common curricular structure, timetable and school day. Within this, there will still be scope for schools to develop their own junior/BGE phase provision in S1-S3 alongside a common senior phase structure and set of options.
11. **How will the common structures impact on course choice for pupils?**
At the end of S3 all pupils will have the opportunity to choose courses across schools, the Bridge and College and to take subjects right through to Advanced Higher and beyond. Guided choice will ensure that pupils follow appropriate and manageable timetables. It is likely that S4 pupils will follow timetables that locate them in their base school for all or most of the time.
12. **Is the new structure a reduction in choices for S4?**
The group of Senior Managers who made the final recommendation looked very carefully at emerging practice across Scotland in a wide variety of schools and consortia. What has been agreed for Dumfries accords with many schools, including some of the highest achieving schools as well as those that reflect more challenging demographics. In each case, schools are highlighting the need to look at the Senior Phase as an opportunity to accumulate courses over three years i.e. the possibility of gaining a larger and broader range of qualifications as well as the opportunity to pursue an academic or vocational specialism right through to AH or beyond. The scale of investment in those 'vocational' areas in the new Bridge offers additional specialist facilities and classrooms in which to pursue a wider range of courses and those which are dependent on equipment that is not affordable in every school. This signals the Council's commitment to developing more learning opportunities in these areas and creating facilities that 'bridge' the gap between school and college/world of work.
13. **How will collaborative working between teachers in different schools actually work?**
As part of the design process, teachers in Dumfries have already had the opportunity to work more closely together. As a consequence of this and of recent In-Service events plans are being made to create Burgh teams and find ways to communicating and exchanging information, materials and ideas. Plans are also being developed for collaborative In-Service events and school professional learning coordinators are looking to schedule these across the Burgh.
14. **What about the importance of teaching continuity?**
Dumfries and Galloway have great teachers who work well with colleagues, work across departments, work with agencies and partners outwith the schools and work across age and stages of learning. Due to developing Secondary and linked primary schools arrangements, teachers from different sectors collaborate on a more

regular basis and in the senior phase the collaboration expands to include employers and further educational establishments. Professional Learning is an ongoing requirement for all staff and is supported and delivered at a school and authority level to maintain and develop the range of skills and knowledge for 21st Century learning.

15. Which courses will run in the Bridge and who will teach them?

As with schools, the Bridge will respond to the needs of pupils and to emerging and existing needs in the workplace in Dumfries and Galloway and beyond. Courses which require high specification equipment (e.g. professional kitchen/ University-level science laboratory, specialist engineering and creative arts facilities) will be offered in the Bridge and will be taught by teachers drawn from schools, college, university and other partner organisations.

16. Which other organisations will be involved in the operation of the Bridge?

In addition to the group of core teaching partners – schools, Dumfries and Galloway College (DAGCOL), Universities and other key contributors will include Employability, Skills Development Scotland, Community Learning and Development, Community Education, National Health Service and local Chamber of Commerce, for example.

17. How will the work in DLT and in the Bridge, in particular, impact on pupils in schools outwith the Burgh?

Students within travelling distance of Dumfries will have the opportunity to access courses where there is availability and capacity – either within the traditional school day or during twilight or other non-traditional time. It is also envisaged that students in other schools will be able to join some class groups using IT and view lessons by way of podcast and other virtual media.

18. What is being looked at in regards to a transport network for learners and teachers?

A school day and structure has been identified and we are looking at what transport infrastructure is needed to support this process. Transport includes pedestrian/ cycling, public and private transport. Education Services need to consider statutory provision and enhanced provision. The emphasis will be on enabling choice and encouraging all forms of sustainable transport as well as catering for those who have no alternative to the car.

19. How will the work in the Bridge impact on adult learners in the wider communities of Dumfries and beyond?

The senior phase options will be available to all learners and returning students will be welcome. Beyond this curriculum the Bridge will offer classes, advice, facilities, accommodation for the widest possible range of activities and initiatives.

20. What are the implications for Additional Support for Learning (ASFL) pupils?

The wide range of opportunities available to learners is inclusive of those who have additional educational needs. Guided choice is crucial here, although there is a clear undertaking that no learner should be disadvantaged because of limited physical access or the non-availability of adapted or bespoke equipment.

21. What is happening to Elmbank? (Secondary Behaviour Support Unit)

As part of the Dumfries Learning Town plans, and following the Supporting Learners Service Review, Elmbank will close as a school and transform into an outreach service, with a small base at The Bridge. Pupils who would attend the current Elmbank provision will be referred through an agreed process to the new outreach service, and a package of support will be developed that meets their needs, including access to opportunities in the Bridge, one-to-one work in a support base in their mainstream school, supported access to mainstream classes in their mainstream school, work experience, and other opportunities. The new outreach service will coordinate the education package available to identified pupils.

22. How is the Bridge different from what is on offer at each of the schools? In addition to the provision of specialist equipment that we cannot justify or afford to provide in each of the secondary schools, the Bridge will be distinctive in both design and ethos. We aim to provide a facility that has a more adult, sophisticated and destination-oriented atmosphere in order to encourage our Senior Phase students to be thinking forward to the next stage of their journey whether that is to college, university or the workplace. You will see from the design how the facility is organised to reflect this.