

Frequently Asked Questions for P7 Pupils and Parents



Information about the school

Where can I get more information about the school and the transition process?

Our Website has lots of information on it at www.wallacehall.co.uk

Furthermore, our Transitions section has lots of information and videos/presentations from staff about the Curriculum, Health and Wellbeing and the Transition Process. It can be found here - www.wallacehall.co.uk/transitions

What are the school times?

School starts at 9.15am and finishes at 3.45pm. At present, we have 7 periods on a Monday and 6 periods Tuesday-Friday. Each of these is approximately 50 minutes long.

Interval is at 11.10am and lunchtime is at 1.10pm.

How will I know where to go/classrooms are?

On the first few days we will arrange for older pupils to take pupils to and from their classes. Once pupils are more familiar with the building then they will be able to go it alone. It won't take long!

How many classrooms are there?

The classroom block is split into 3 floors and each floor has between 10 and 12 classrooms on it.

Where will pupils go for lunch? What is the food like?

S1s are not allowed to go offsite at lunchtimes so the vast majority use the Canteen.

The menu in our Canteen changed last year and this has been really popular. There are a number of hot and cold options which pupils can choose from. A large proportion of our pupils from all year groups choose to eat in the canteen.

Will pupils be able to get a locker?

Yes, Lockers cost £5 and you will have them for your whole time at Wallace Hall. These are useful for storing books and PE kit etc during the day.

How does the School communicate with parents/carers?

Parental communication is very important to us and we communicate with parents/carers in a number of different ways depending on the context. We use Groupcall Messenger texts and emails to send out information and letters to parents. These are also uploaded to the school website.

We also use our Social Media channels which are:

Facebook: Wallace Hall Academy, Primary and ELC

Twitter: @WallaceHallSch

Instagram: wallacehallsch

Finally, the school can be contacted by phone on 01848 332120 or via email at gw08officewallace@ea.dumgal.sch. Our office staff will be able to direct you to the appropriate member of staff.

Will pupils get a Young Scot Card?

All pupils will get a Young Scot Card that allows them to pay for food in our Canteen on the card. This can be pre-loaded with money online. However, our canteen also accepts cash or cheques.

Young Scot Cards will be delivered to your child's Primary School prior to our P7 Induction Days and need to be registered online before use.

What is the Uniform? Is there a specific PE kit that is required?

Here is a link to the Transitions part of our website which has information about the Uniform at the bottom of the page - <https://www.wallacehall.co.uk/transitions>.

There is no specific kit for PE. Normal sports clothing is all that's required along with warmer clothes for outdoor classes.

What clubs are there at Wallace Hall Academy?

We have a number of clubs available at Wallace Hall including sports clubs such as Football, Rugby, Netball, Volleyball and Hockey. Our Drama Club pupils have put on a number of school shows.

We also have other clubs such as Mandarin and Baking and even groups such as the Eco Group.

Transitions

What will Transitions for P7 pupils be like this year?

We hope to have transition visits for cluster pupils in term 3 (January to April). However, this is dependant on Covid guidance at that time. We then hope to have visits for both cluster and non-cluster pupils in late April/early May. The plan is to have three Induction Days in June as normal which will allow pupils to experience a few days at Wallace Hall in preparation for coming to secondary school in August 2022. Again, this is all dependant on the Covid guidance at that time.

All cluster P7 pupils will also be given an interactive Transition Booklet in November, this contains activities and information and will be use throughout the year to guide them through the Transition process. It will introduce pupils to the school, they will see key members of staff and the booklet will also be used (with accompanying videos) to do subject tasters of all of the subjects pupils will be doing at Secondary School.

In addition, all P7 pupils will be given the opportunity to join a Transition Team on Microsoft Teams. This will allow pupils to communicate to get to know each other throughout the year. This space will also be used to interact with the Senior buddies who are going out to meet the P7s in late November 2021 and again, later on in the year.

Is moving to Secondary School stressful?

Any transition from primary to secondary school can be stressful but we're very confident that if you come to Wallace Hall we'll be able to help make it as stress free as possible. We do this through our Transition programmes, making sure you have all the help you need when you start and ensuring you've always got someone to talk to if you have any problems.

Classes

What House/Class will I be in?

If you have an older sibling at Wallace Hall then you will most likely be in the same house as them. If you do not then we will allocate you a House based on the class sizes and combinations of pupils from different primary schools. Our three houses are Cairn, Nith and Scaur.

Who will be in my class and will I be split up from everyone in my current class?

It's likely that not everyone from your primary class will be in your classes at secondary school. However, we will take advice from your primary school teachers about which combinations of pupils would work well together and usually this is a very successful method of compiling the classes.

What subjects will be on an S1 pupil's timetable?

S1 will be split into 4-5 classes. Each class' timetable will be different. The subjects S1s will have on their timetable are Maths, English, History, Geography, Modern Studies, Religious Education, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Art, Music, Drama, PE, Home Economics, Design and Technology, ICT and Computing.

How will I make new friends and still see my old friends?

The great thing about secondary school is that you get the chance to make new friends from other primary schools. That doesn't mean you should forget about your old friends though and there will be plenty of opportunities to spend time with everyone either within classes or at breaks/lunchtimes.

Transport

How and where do I get the bus?

For getting the bus to school, pupils will receive a letter stating where your bus stop is (if you live within catchment).

If you live out with catchment then the Houstons 236 Bus and Stagecoach 246 Bus leave from Dumfries. There is also a 246 Bus that comes from Sanquhar. Links to timetables are below:

Houstons 236 - <https://www.houstonscoaches.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/236-10.08.2020.pdf>

Stagecoach 246 - https://tiskon-maps-stagecoachbus.s3.amazonaws.com/Timetables/West%20Scotland/West%20Scotland_Service%20Uplift/Dum Service 246 P1.pdf

For going home, all the buses come to the school and leave soon after the school day ends.

Bus passes are given to pupils on the first few days of school after the summer holidays, before that pupils will be able to get on buses without a pass.

Will I be eligible for a bus pass?

If you live within out catchment and further than 3 miles from the school you will be eligible for a bus pass. You can check if you're eligible by following this link:

<https://apps.dumgal.gov.uk/findnearest>

Support

What support will my child get?

All pupils will have a designated Principal Teacher of Pupil Support that will ensure you get all the support you need. These can be from staff within the school or work with partner agencies such as School Counselling, School Nurse and CAMHS.

Will there be support in class for all pupils?

Yes, we have an excellent team of Learning Assistants who will be in classes. They are there to support all pupils in the class, not just those with Additional Support Needs.

What if I get lost?

In the first few days we will have 'buddies' that are there to make sure this doesn't happen.

How will I get emotional support if I need it?

Any teacher will be happy to help you in this situation but you will also be assigned a Principal Teacher of Pupil Support who will be your point of contact for any issues or worries you might have.

You will have the same PT of Pupil Support throughout your time at Wallace Hall so this allows good relationships to be developed with pupils and parents.

Will teachers know if pupils have Additional Support Needs?

Yes, this information is shared from your primary school and we will make sure that our teachers are aware of this so that they can make sure your needs are met.

We also have extra literacy and numeracy support available for pupils/parents that request it. This should be done through your primary school and they will pass on the request to us.

Depending on COVID-19 restrictions, we will also try to arrange Enhanced Transitions for pupils with more severe Additional Support Needs.