

Trinity Academy: Information for Parents/Carers

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q Who do I go to if I have a question or concern?

Office Staff: Most enquiries are fielded by our office staff: by phone, e-mail, letter or in person. 0131 478 5050 or admin@trinity.edin.sch.uk

Website: We have an informative website which is updated regularly. Parents/carers can contact us through the website: <http://trinity.webplus.net/>

Absence Line: parents should phone the absence line to report pupil absence – 0131 467 1498

Register Teachers deal with day to day attendance (absence notes etc) and issue general information to pupils (08.30-08.35 each day)

Pupil Support Leaders (formerly Guidance teachers -one for each “house”) deal with questions of a pastoral nature – personal, health and social issues. They meet with their classes 1A1, 1O1, 1S1 etc., for one lesson each week.

Arran House: Doug Robertson doug.robertson@trinity.edin.sch.uk

Orkney House: Louise Clarke louise.clarke@trinity.edin.sch.uk

Skye House: Sian Oliver/James Todd TRI-SKYE@trinity.edin.sch.uk

Support for Learning teachers deal with concerns in relation to learning difficulties – dyslexia etc. The Support for Learning Leader is Bryan Campbell. Bryan.Campbell@trinity.edin.sch.uk

Class Teachers deal with issues relating to their subject. In most cases, issues are dealt with through our reports and parental consultation evenings. However, parents are welcome to contact subject teachers by letter or e-mail if they have a concern.

Curriculum Leaders deal with broader issues connected to their subject and in relation to their Faculty colleagues (teachers).

Deputy Head Teachers deal with issues relating to their remit. Examples of this are SQA matters, the school timetable and reporting. They also deal with issues that cannot be resolved at Faculty level e.g., pupil indiscipline.

S1 – S3 DHT Kath Stewart kath.stewart@trinity.edin.sch.uk

S4 – S6 DHT Susan Cook susan.cook@trinity.edin.sch.uk

The **Business Manager** deals with issues relating to the school building, the budget and any matters involving non-teaching staff. margaret.leak@trinity.edin.sch.uk

The **Head Teacher** has ultimate responsibility for all school issues.
bryan.paterson@trinity.edin.sch.uk

Text Messages: on occasions, we use text messaging to communicate with parents. Please ensure the school office has an up to date number.

Q What is the “House” System?

As indicated above, our “House” System is used to provide support for our young people through Pupil Support Leaders and Deputy Head Teachers. We are also developing an element of competition between houses in relation to academic and wider achievement. An example of this is our annual “Class Games” where certificates and trophies are awarded to the winning class in each year (S1-S3).

Practical Classes: all pupils are allocated to a “House” – Arran, Orkney or Skye. In S1, there are 7 practical classes – 1A1, 1A2, 1O1, 1O2, 1O3, 1S1, 1S2. Practical subjects are: Science, Art, Music, Design Technology, Food & Consumer Technology, Computing, Business Education, Personal & Social Education. The maximum practical class size is 20.

Non-practical Classes: In S1, there are 5 non-practical classes – 1X1, 1X2, 1Y1, 1Y2, 1Y3 – Non-practical subjects are: English, Maths, Social Subjects, Modern Languages, Physical Education. The maximum non-practical class size is 33 (none of our classes exceed 30).

S3 Classes: Pupils have an element of choice for S3, although they must take at least one subject from each curricular area. They do 10 subjects plus Physical Education, Religious/Moral Education and Personal/Social/Health/ Education. Maximum class sizes are: practical 20, non-practical 30.

S4-S6 Classes: Pupils choose 6 subjects for S4 and up to 5 subjects for S5/6 (we are moving towards a “Senior Phase” model whereby pupils will choose up to 6 subjects in S5/6). English and Maths are compulsory in S4 and English is highly recommended in S5.

Registration: Our pupils register in year group sets. There are up to 30 pupils in each register class.

Q Are classes set by ability?

In **S1/S2**, most classes are mixed ability. Exceptions are English, Maths and Social Subjects. Modern Language classes are set in S2. Setting is broad and allows for movement between classes.

In **S3**, setting takes place more widely but depends upon the number of classes attending a subject at the same time.

In **S4-6**, most subjects set their classes but again, this is only possible if there a subject has more than one class running at the same time (this depends largely on pupil choice)

Setting decisions are based on pupil assessment information which includes:

- Information from Primary school (for S1 classes)
- Standardised test scores in literacy and numeracy (pupils sit these in P7 and S2)
- End of unit tests and continuous assessments in all subjects
- SQA results (unit assessments, prelim exams, final exams)

Q How do I find out about courses and programmes of work?

The school has produced a guide to the “Broad General Education” which covers S1 to S3. It is available on the school website (from August 2015) <http://trinity.webplus.net/>

Details of the subjects and courses followed in S4 to S6 can be found on the following websites.

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/>

<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/70972.html>

Q How do I find out about my son/daughter’s progress?

Assessment, Reporting & Parental Consultation

In the “Broad General Education”, each subject has a list of “experiences and outcomes” which describe the content and skills young people should encounter during S1-S3. Each subject also has a list of “Significant Aspects of Learning” which we use when reporting to parents. These help us to tell parents about the learner’s strengths and areas for development. They include statements like “the learner is able to describe and explain the main parts of an ecosystem” and “the learner can interpret sources and evidence and present an informed view” and “the learner can speak clearly, audibly, fluently and expressively”.

In the Senior Phase (S4-S6), assessment criteria and processes are set by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/70972.html>

Most pupils should have achieved Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) Level 3 by the end of S3. Many will have progressed to level 4. The flowchart below summarises, in very general terms, the progression pathway through the BGE into the Senior Phase.



Reporting has two main purposes. Firstly, it provides clear, positive and constructive feedback about learning and progress. Secondly it creates an agenda for discussion about next steps in learning between:

- learners and teachers
- teachers and parents
- learners and parents

It is important that teachers engage effectively with both learners and their parents. Our reports highlight pupil strengths and areas for development. These are identified by careful monitoring of pupil progress through continuous and summative assessments. Our reporting system is placing an increasing emphasis on the teacher/pupil dialogue which takes place prior to reports being issued. This ensures that reports are an accurate summary of a pupil's progress, achievements and next steps and should come as no surprise to pupils or their parents.

Q What is "Learning for Success"?

Every pupil in S1-S5 has a "learning for Success" period on their timetable (Friday 08.35 – 09.00). They meet in their Tutor Groups which have a maximum class size of 20. Their Tutor Teacher will be with them throughout their time in school to help establish supportive and effective working relationships. During this period, pupils reflect on their learning by keeping a written record of their strengths and areas for development in each subject. Pupils are expected to "review" 3 or 4 subjects per week. In addition, Tutor Teachers will carry out 1:1 interviews while the others in the class are completing their self-reflection. The purpose of this interview is to discuss the pupil's general progress and is also an opportunity to celebrate academic successes and wider achievement both in and out-with school. Tutors will also discuss a pupil's report when it is issued.

Q How much homework is expected?

"A better name for homework might be "learning out of school". Children learn a great deal at school and parents can add to that learning by supporting them at home. Homework is learning which children do for themselves, perhaps with the support of parents or other family members. Doing homework is important – it makes a difference to learning"

Education Scotland website – "Parentzone"

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone/>

The Broad General Education (S1-S3)

S1-S3 homework expectations are outlined in the "Parental Guide to the BGE", available on the school website (from August 2015). <http://trinity.webplus.net/>

The Senior Phase (S4-S6)

Homework is an essential part of all National Qualification courses. The amount of homework will depend upon the subject and the level of study. Pupils can expect the amount and complexity of homework to increase as they progress from National 4 and 5 courses through to Higher and Advanced Higher.

Q What is a pupil profile?

A pupil profile is a snapshot of a young person's best achievements at a given point in time. It is a positive record of achievement to date. A profile emphasises strengths and does not identify detailed points for development. This latter information is contained in a pupil report (see above).

Profiles are for learners and their parents/carers. The purposes of profiles are to:

- provide learners with a reflective summary statement of achievement
- recognise progress in learning and achievement
- challenge, motivate and support young people
- build learners' skills and ability to reflect on learning
- support and inform transition

Profiles are produced at key points of transition in learning – P7 and S3. At Trinity Academy, interim profiles are also produced at the end of S1 and S2.

Profiles include:

- information on progress across all curriculum areas, highlighting best achievements
- information on progress in literacy, numeracy and health & wellbeing
- a learner's statement which outlines the young person's best achievements in and out of school.
- a record of awards as appropriate.

Profiles are held by Pupil Support Leaders (see above contact details). **A copy of the S3 profile will be sent to parents towards the end of S3.**

Subject areas also use profiling to track the progress of young people through the Broad General Education (S1-S3). These profiles are retained by teachers but can be discussed during parental consultations.

If you have any suggestions about additional FAQs, please contact us by e-mail:

admin@trinity.edin.sch.uk

Thank you.