



Wellington School (Ayr)

School Development Plan

Session 2025 - 2026

Introduction

The ethos of Wellington School is summarised in five words: **Care, Confidence, Challenge, Commitment, Creativity**. These underpin the school's approach and we strive continually to develop the range and quality of the opportunities that we provide for pupils at every stage of their schooling, from Nursery through to S6.

Independent schools are currently operating in a challenging commercial environment. The last decade has been characterised by a sequence of cost increases, including increases to teacher pay and pension contributions, the removal of the business rate reduction previously offered to all charities and, more generally, the increased cost of services and utilities that has affected most families and businesses. Most recently, of course, an education tax in the form of VAT at the rate of 20% was imposed at short notice without any mitigation.

Wellington published in 2018 an ambitious masterplan for the development of the school estate. Relentless financial headwinds have prevented the school from realising this plan, but it remains a statement of intent and it provides a vision for the future that may one day be achievable.

Meanwhile, we seek always to find ways to ensure continual school improvement and this Development Plan documents our plans and intentions. At the same time, it provides information and updates about projects and initiatives that are in progress or have been completed in recent years.

This year, there will be a renewed focus on engaging with staff, pupils and parents regarding future development priorities.

- **Focus groups have operated in the Junior School for many years. A programme of themed focus groups is planned for the Senior School, which will give parents the opportunity to contribute ideas and discuss areas of common interest in order to inform future strategic planning and development.**

1. Teaching and Learning

The school operates an annual programme of Departmental Review, to which all subject departments and areas of the school contribute. The process comprises three steps:

- A formal review document is completed by each subject department, providing an overview of initiatives and academic performance, whilst also giving teachers the opportunity to offer comments and suggestions relating to the whole school.
- A meeting takes place to discuss the review document, attended by the Head of Department, a link member of the Senior Management Team and the Head.
- Departments are required to formulate and document departmental targets for discussion and review.

The following priorities and initiatives are based in part on the Departmental Reviews of 2024/25, taking into account also the findings of an IT/AI questionnaire completed by teachers:

- **Focus on the development of critical and independent thinking skills in the classroom.**
- **Formulate a Digital Learning Policy to guide teachers regarding the use of both digital and traditional approaches, as best suited to the needs of individuals, the class and the course.**
- **Take steps to train teachers in the use of AI (Artificial Intelligence) in the classroom.**
- **Develop teaching materials with which pupils can be taught how to understand the power and the shortcomings of AI tools, so that they are empowered to use them positively and responsibly.**
- **Formulate a first draft policy regarding the use of AI within Teaching and Learning.**
- Support and guide teaching staff in self-evaluation and planning for improvements using GTCS Professional Standards and HGIOS 4 quality indicators.
- Provide high quality opportunities for professional learning and collaboration.
- Promote outdoor learning opportunities throughout the school.

- Continue to build on the themes of creativity and challenge by considering the question, **what should teaching and learning look like in my classroom?**

2. Curriculum

- Continue to revise and refresh courses in S1/2 to ensure their relevance and appeal for pupils.
- Continue to develop the ways in which standardised test scores (CAT) are used to inform and guide the curricular support provided to pupils.
- Develop further the interventions put in place to support individual pupils following year group assessments and preliminary examinations (S4/5/6).

3. Campus Development and Sustainability

Campus development was restricted to essential maintenance and small-scale projects during the Covid pandemic, from March 2020 until March 2022. Since then, however, several significant upgrades have been completed.

Projects completed in 2025 include:

- **Vacant space on the top floor of Carleton Turrets has been redeveloped as a study area and quiet space for senior pupils, available from August 2025.**
- The completion of essential maintenance work to sea-facing windows and their surrounds in the Junior School.

Projects completed in 2023/4 include:

- Refurbishment of the Drumley Annex to create a new Modern Languages Hub. The Modern Languages Department moved into their new accommodation in August 2024.
- The English classroom on the top floor of Carleton Turrets was relocated to Room 13, one of the rooms vacated by the Modern Languages Department.
- The Business Education Department relocated from the top floor of Carleton Turrets to Rooms 14 and 15, previously part of the Modern Languages Department. Room 15 (the old languages lab) has been completed refurbished and refitted for the teaching of Accounting.

Sustainability aims and objectives include:

- Produce a campus action plan in partnership with the school Eco-Committee.
- There has been a significant reduction in the quantity of waste going to landfill. A previous goal was to achieve a reduction of 33% and the number of industrial bins collected each week has been reduced from 9 to 6. There has also been a significant reduction in the quantity of food waste.
- Complete a whole school energy and carbon audit by August 2026.

4. Marketing

- Images used on the school website were updated in 2024/25 and a new welcome video is to be produced in session 2025/26.
- Continue to promote and align the school brand through campaigns via appropriate media channels including, print, radio and digital/online.
- Continue to share stories, news and updates with all members of the wider Wellington community using the website, social media and the school magazine, The Turret.
- Develop further the use of pupil and parent testimonials, using images, text and video.
- **Build on successful FP engagement during the Centenary (2023/24) year and continue to develop FP communications, through social media, 'The Turret' and a wider range of events.**
- **Develop the use of videos as a form of promotion that are shared online via various social media platforms.**
- **Engage with staff through a focus group to generate fresh marketing ideas.**
- **Plan and implement a range of fundraising initiatives to help fund a replacement all-weather hockey surface at Doonside.**

5. Pupil Welfare

- Continue to enrich pupil experiences in PSE courses through visiting speakers and workshops, promoting the central themes of wellbeing and equality.
- Vape alarms have been installed in key locations around the school. PSE courses from S1-S6 will continue to develop to focus on new risks surrounding substance abuse, including vaping.
- Provision of PSE will be further enhanced in S5. The development of courses based on the key themes of promotion of well-being, planning for choices and changes, life skills and healthy relationships and consent will be ongoing throughout the academic year. SQA certification at National 5 level for participants in the PSE course will be explored and implemented.
- Further Child Protection training will take place and streamlined internal reporting procedures will be updated in line with recent changes to national guidance.
- Policies to be updated related to safeguarding and pupil welfare, with a particular focus on development of an attendance and engagement policy.
- A comprehensive mobile phone policy was implemented in February 2024. This will be evaluated in consultation with key stakeholders.
- The provision of digital learning related to wellbeing and online safety will be piloted and developed more widely.

6. Careers Education

- Pastoral staff will continue to build links with external agencies to provide pupils with opportunities involving partners in the community.
- The Careers Coordinator (appointed in August 2024) will further develop careers information sessions and enrichment opportunities within school through PSE and targeted events, and in the wider community.
- The S6 post-exam programme includes workshops on the topics of personal finance and employability.

7. Quality Assurance, Readiness for Inspection and Self-Evaluation

- Consider ways of making more explicit use of HGIOS 4 in whole school and departmental review processes
- Continue to develop PRD procedures and respond to latest GTCS changes
- Maintain and further develop the active Professional Learning Group, ensuring that academic staff have the opportunity to engage in professional dialogue related to teaching and learning in order to enhance pupil experience and outcomes.

8. IT/MIS

- Digital Learning and Artificial Intelligence (AI). Develop practical policies and strategies regarding Digital Learning and the use of AI for Teaching and Learning.
- **Hardware Update for Windows 11 Compliance. Replace and update current school hardware to ensure compatibility with Windows 11, providing enhanced performance and security across all devices.**
- Cloud Technology. Continue developing cloud platforms, such as Office 365 and Google Classroom, to enable seamless collaboration and remote learning for both pupils and staff.
- Safeguarding. Continue the use of safeguarding tools such as Smoothwall Monitor and Classroom Monitor to support and maintain our safeguarding practices. These tools help us protect our pupils and create a safe online environment.
- Chromebook Initiative. Continue the Chromebook initiative, which provides every pupil from P5 to S6 with a personal device, ensuring that all pupils have access to appropriate technology to support their learning.
- Enhance Parental Communication. Review and enhance current parent communication software to improve the access and usability of our communication platforms.
- Introduction of Exam.net. This will enhance pupil experience with SQA digital assessments, allowing pupils to take exams on their own Chromebooks in a secure, user-friendly environment.
- MIS Evaluation. Evaluate our current Management Information System (MIS) to identify the best available solution to support the school's needs and operations in the future.
- Cyber Essentials Accreditation. Achieve Cyber Essentials certification to strengthen the school's cybersecurity framework, ensuring the protection of information and safe digital learning environments for all.

- Printing. Continue to develop our eco status by analysing printing statistics and finding ways to reduce paper consumption.

9. Operations/HR

- The school is working towards finalised a 'Voluntary Recognition and Partnership Agreement' with the teaching Trade Unions to establish a framework for consultation and negotiation.
- Review of Risk Assessment documentation
- Finalisation of Critical Incident response plan
- Rolling review of policies and procedures

10. Public Benefit

- Maintain compliance of Bursary scheme with OSCR
The school continues to offer a comprehensive Bursary scheme that enables a significant number of pupils to join Wellington, and to continue their education here.
- Continue to build mutually beneficial partnerships with local businesses, charities and associations.

SPJ
Sep 2025