

DUNEDIN SCHOOL

Delivers unique education to individuals

**STANDARDS, QUALITY
and
IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

2019-2020

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INTRODUCTION

2019-2020: An Extraordinary School Year

Every year, the staff at Dunedin carry out whole-school evaluation activities to determine how well we think we are doing, and to establish where we need to make changes and improvements.

In an ordinary year, we would include this evaluation in an annual report on our activities and achievements for the whole session, September to June, and also highlight the areas we have prioritised for improvement during the following session.

However, as we all know, 2019-2020 turned out to be anything but ordinary, culminating as it did in an unprecedented four-month school closure in March as the coronavirus pandemic took hold.

Whilst none of us could have foreseen this closure, and none of us were fully prepared for it, with the support of families, other professionals, and our Governors, we got through it - and we have learned a lot from it.

During the period of closure, staff made the decision to proceed with whole-school evaluation, despite the circumstances. However, we chose to focus specifically on evaluating our response to the lockdown, our support for pupils and families, and what can learn from it. You will find a summary of this evaluation later in the report, along with the priorities we have identified as part of our “recovery” plan for session 2020-2021.

First, though, we have included information on the progress we were making with last year’s improvement priorities, up until the point of school closure on 23 March, 2020.

We have also included a brief summary of other activities and achievements which took place before the closure. We hope this will be a reminder of what being at Dunedin is really all about, and a celebration of what our young people do. We are very much looking forward to the time when we can reinstate these sorts of experiences and activities; they enrich the curriculum and help pupils to develop many important skills and qualities.

We hope you find this report useful. However, if you have any questions about any of the contents, please, as always, get in touch with us.

THE SCHOOL IN CONTEXT

Dunedin is a small, independent school situated in Cameron Toll in Edinburgh. We can enrol up to 21 pupils, who might come to us at any stage in their secondary school career, and from anywhere across Edinburgh and the Lothians. Pupils may be placed with us privately, by parents/carers, or by a local authority.

We often refer to ourselves as a “second chance” school. Not everyone thrives in a mainstream setting, and Dunedin offers a very nurturing and supportive alternative for young people who, for a variety of reasons, have usually spent a significant period of time out of education.

Despite our size, we offer a broad curriculum, and pupils can work towards formal qualifications, where appropriate, as well as develop skills for learning, life and work through various extra-curricular trips and activities which are organised throughout the year.

Our first priority, however, is the emotional wellbeing of our pupils, and we try to remove as many of the barriers to learning they may have previously experienced as we possibly can. Our approach is gentle, and more informal and flexible than is possible in most mainstream settings. By this means, we encourage pupils to re-engage with education, and to feel a sense of belonging in a school where they are valued for who they are, and where they are supported to realise their potential.

THE AIMS OF THE SCHOOL

- To enable pupils to re-engage with learning and experience a sense of achievement and success
- To create a welcoming, sympathetic environment where pupils and their families feel supported
- To help pupils to develop self-respect, self-confidence and a sense of self-worth
- To respect the individuality of all pupils
- To foster in pupils mutual trust and tolerance of others
- To reintroduce pupils to a holistic educational environment
- To encourage enjoyment in learning
- To provide a broad curriculum which is flexible and can cater for individual needs and interests
- To motivate pupils to aspire to their full potential
- To support pupils to move on from school to a positive destination of their choice

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING

Dunedin School has a rigorous child protection policy in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of our pupils, and every member of staff must sign a Child Protection Code of Conduct on an annual basis. Guidance within the policy is regularly updated to take account of changing legal and societal landscapes. This ensures that all staff working with the young people at Dunedin School have the knowledge and confidence to deal with a child protection situation, should one arise, and know what action to take if they have any concerns about the welfare of the pupils in our care.

THE NATIONAL CONTEXT FOR EDUCATION

Dunedin, like all schools in Scotland, must work towards achieving the Scottish Government's priorities which are set out in **The National Improvement Framework (NIF)**.

The National Improvement Framework was launched in 2016 and is reviewed annually. It is an important document for all schools in Scotland which sets out the Scottish Government's vision to achieve excellence and equity for all learners and to close the attainment gap.

The National Improvement Framework sets out four key priorities that everyone in Scottish education should be working towards:

- improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy
- closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children
- improvement in children's and young people's health and wellbeing
- improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people

The Framework also identifies six key drivers of improvement. Progress across all of these is needed to deliver the improvements we want to see for all learners:

- School leadership
- Teacher professionalism
- Parental engagement
- Assessment of children's progress
- School improvement
- Performance information

The National Improvement Framework sits alongside **Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)**, **Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)**, and **Developing the Young Workforce (DYW)**, which are the three supporting pillars of the Scottish education system.

In normal circumstances, Dunedin School's improvement planning is guided by the four key priorities and the six key drivers noted above, as well as Education Scotland's self-evaluation document, **How Good is our School? (4th Edition)**.

However, planning for improvement also - and importantly - takes into account the school's own particular context, and (especially) the needs of our pupils.

Session 2019-2020 has not been a normal year, however, and, as advised by the Scottish Government, our improvement planning priorities for next session will focus on the following:

- Recovery
- Continuity of provision under these changed circumstances
- Supporting student and staff health and wellbeing
- Transitions at all levels
- The impact of tragedy in communities
- Identifying gaps in learning
- Renewed focus on closing the poverty related attainment gap
- What can be done to remedy any impact that there has been around the widening of inequalities of outcome experienced by children and young people

REVIEW OF PROGRESS FOR SESSION 2019-2020

First, here is a review of the progress we made in our improvement targets in session 2019-2020 **up until school closure in March 2020.**

In 2018-2019, staff identified two improvement priorities which formed the basis of our School Improvement Plan for 2019-2020. The progress achieved in these priorities is summarised below.

School Improvement Priority 1: Child protection and Safeguarding	
Link to National Improvement Framework Priorities and Drivers	Link to <i>How Good is our School?</i> (4th Edition)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement in children's and young people's health and wellbeing • closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children 	<p>Learning Provision - <i>2.1: Child protection and Safeguarding</i></p> <p>Successes and Achievements - <i>3.1: Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion</i></p>
<p>Target/Where we want to be (Outcomes focusing on learning, achievement and wellbeing):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school works together to ensure all pupils at Dunedin are safe, well cared for and are able to flourish 	
<p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver refreshed whole-school child protection training • Provide specific training for new members of staff on the school's Child Protection Policy and Procedures • All staff to complete online Prevent training • Form a new Safeguarding committee, to include a member of the Board of Governors • Write a refreshed, streamlined policy for parents so they are well informed about the school's Child Protection Policy and Procedures • Through work in Personal and Social Education (PSE), ensure all pupils understand how staff can help them if they have safeguarding issues 	<p>Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training was delivered to all staff by Anne Darling in August 2019 • Two new members of staff who took up their posts in January 2020 have subsequently undertaken basic online training • Prevent Training was completed by and certified for all staff during the first weeks of school closure • A new committee has been formed comprising two members of staff and a Governor. All members of the committee have recently undergone further training and will meet on a regular basis • The streamlined policy has been written and shared with parents and carers • Due to the lockdown, PSE classes were suspended in March so this will be carried over into session 2020-2021
<p>Impact:</p> <p>Action Points 1-3 - All staff have a better understanding of Safeguarding and Child Protection issues and our school policy and procedures. All staff have undertaken Prevent training and should be able to recognise the signs of radicalisation.</p> <p>Action Points 4 - Knowledge and expertise has been spread across a number of staff to ensure all safeguarding and child protection procedures are being followed; the Board of Governors has a good insight into the school's procedures to ensure it is fulfilling its statutory obligations.</p> <p>Action Point 5 - Parents and carers have a clear understanding of how the school is fulfilling statutory obligations and protecting pupils, and what will happen if there are any concerns.</p> <p>Action Point 6 - Pupils will understand how staff can help them or where to go for help if they have safeguarding issues.</p>	
<p>Next Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Safeguarding Committee will hold regular meetings throughout the next academic year • The Child Protection Co-ordinator (CPC), the Deputy CPC and the Governor on the Safeguarding Committee will all complete Level 4 training by June 2021 • The PSE Curriculum during session 2020-2021 will cover Safeguarding 	

REVIEW OF PROGRESS FOR SESSION 2019-2020
(*contd.*)

School Improvement Priority 2: Sustainability	
Link to National Improvement Framework Priorities and Drivers	Link to <i>How Good is our School?</i> (4th Edition)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy Improvement in children's and young people's health and wellbeing 	Learning Provision - <i>2.2: Development of the Curriculum</i>
Target/Where we want to be (Outcomes focusing on learning, achievement and wellbeing):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scope what sustainability means to us and how we can appropriately embed it at all levels Identify what we are currently doing and identify targets as to how Dunedin can become more sustainable Promote an awareness of, create a folio of examples of, and embed a place in the Curriculum for Learning for Sustainability across the whole school 	
Action	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member of staff to cascade training from Learning for Sustainability courses attended Create a pupils' focus group to discuss how school can improve sustainability Collate aims for, and examples of, sustainability from each dept (as outlined in Department Improvement Plans) and share good practice Identify areas for improvement on a whole school level Implement where appropriate and achievable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member of staff shared details of course with working group The focus group has been suggested to pupils but, as a result of closure, has not yet been formed Some sharing of good practice has taken place As a result of school closure, other action points will be carried forward
Impact:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each department has had a thorough audit of its approach to sustainability. There are many examples of good practice that can be shared with the whole school 	
Next Steps:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas for improvement need to be identified on a department and whole school level and plans put in place for these improvements Explore the Eco Flag award as a way of developing sustainability across the curriculum Set up a working group for the Eco Flag award 	

REVIEW OF PROGRESS FOR SESSION 2019-2020 (contd.)

In addition to the two main school improvement priorities identified above, staff work on a number of other initiatives throughout the year which we include on a separate improvement action plan. Work on many of these initiatives came to a halt in March, so progress is limited and may continue into next session. This is summarised below:

	Initiative	Action and Progress
1.	Plan and manage implementation and updating of all school policies to reflect requirements of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Plan and manage technical changes to meet GDPR	The planned changes to meet GDPR are almost complete. Updating of policies will continue in 2020-2021 Technical changes are complete. All school computers have been updated to supported software. Technical infrastructure has been updated to separate business and guest use of WiFi
2.	Plan and prepare for HMIE Inspection	We have met with our new Link Inspector, and a working group has carried out some preparatory work on the new style of inspection. There will be no inspections during 2020-2021 to allow schools time to recover from school closure, but we will continue to stay in contact with our Link Inspector
3.	Identify ways to improve the management of staff within the flat management system	The school closure in March brought work on this to a halt. It will be an area carried forward into session 2020-2021
4.	Identify and implement ways of better supporting new staff (including review of handbook, review of mentors, exit interviews/questionnaires). Trial with new members of staff and ask them to evaluate current support	The Dunedin Staff Handbook has been updated and mentoring procedures reviewed. Mentoring continued throughout the school closure. Exit interviews and questionnaires will be created during the next session. Formal evaluation of support will also be carried forward to next session
5.	Review the procedures in place for agreeing trial placements, including looking at the quality of information shared by other professionals and the way in which this information is presented. Identify changes needed to improve the process, gain agreement from all staff and implement	A range of initial papers were reviewed, and changes to improve the process have been identified and agreed. Work on creating an improved system is ongoing and will be trialled by staff when complete
6.	Review and recommend ideas for further involvement of parents and partners and how to engage them in our pupils' learning	Progress in this area was hindered by the lockdown. However, because of the nature of the schooling that our pupils had in lockdown, unplanned progress in engaging with families has been made which can be built on next session
7.	Recruit a Transition Support Co-ordinator	Jen Laing has taken up this part-time post and began supporting leavers during the period of school closure. She will continue to support them for at least 6 months after their leaving date and has drawn up plans for supporting current senior phase pupils, so that transition planning can begin in S4
8.	Formalising planning and recording the impact on learners of collaborative projects and partnership working	A pro-forma has been created to formalise planning and record the desired impact of partnership working. School closure and ongoing restrictions mean that trialling the form is on hold

REVIEW OF PROGRESS FOR SESSION 2019-2020
(contd.)

	Initiative	Action and Progress
9.	Reporting – make recommendations on earlier parents’ evenings or a split night, encouraging parents to attend, timing and size of reports and providing more feedback	Staff discussed the timing, frequency and length of reports throughout the year and agreed the following changes: the autumn report will remain the same; there will be a report for senior pupils before Easter and a summary report for all other pupil in the summer term. No changes were agreed re parents’ evening. However, as a result of current restrictions, staff will be reviewing how best to report to parents and ensure they feel engaged and informed in changed circumstances
10.	Review admissions and school tours	Challenges around managing an increased number of requests for school visits, and how best to support new pupils beginning a trial were identified. New strategies have been implemented so the school administrator can manage visits more efficiently, and pupils on trial are supported by a named member of staff from the beginning. As a result of current restrictions, school visits are continuing, but are more strictly managed to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff
11.	Review the school ethos and values	Planned discussion regarding the ethos and values of the school could not take place due to school closure and will be revisited in time

PROGRESS IN HEALTH AND WELLBEING, LITERACY AND NUMERACY AS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL 2019-2020

These three important areas of Curriculum for Excellence link to the following National Improvement Framework key priorities:

- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy
- Improvement in children's and young people's health and wellbeing

Up until the point of school closure in March, we continued to offer a wide range of activities to develop Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing across the curriculum, through interdisciplinary learning, and opportunities for wider achievement such as:

- Collaboration with Drake Music
- Horse riding
- Weekly leisure and sporting activities
- The annual charity coffee morning

Please see the school website for more information about these - and other - events and what our pupils achieved.

Again, the requirement to close the school as of 23 March 2020 meant that we were not able to offer as many extra-curricular experiences and activities to pupils last session as we would in normal circumstances, or to complete initiatives to support Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing as we'd hoped.

However, we have briefly summarised some of the work we had been doing before closure, and detailed some of the initiatives we introduced during the period of lockdown to provide support in these areas.

**PROGRESS IN HEALTH AND WELLBEING, LITERACY AND NUMERACY
AS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL
2019-2020**

	Progress	Next Steps
<p>Health and Wellbeing (HWB)</p>	<p>Before the school closure in March: During this session, staff decided to focus on delivering activities and opportunities which would encourage pupils to develop their understanding of the human body and use the knowledge gained to maintain and improve their wellbeing and health. Specifically, it was agreed to focus on the topic of ‘Healthy Hearts’. A plan was drawn up for delivering the appropriate Experience and Outcome (E&O), which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A heart dissection centred around factors which affect the health of the heart, blood pressure and pulse • First Aid session on CPR • The impact of diet on the heart. Staff food diaries analysed by pupils and recommendations made • Hearts in the history of medicine and the history of heart surgery • Lunchtime walks and monitoring of heart rate <p>There were also some planned activities which were carried forward from the previous year to do with building resilience and mental health. They included a visit to Redhall Gardens and a Film Festival curated by pupils around the theme of resilience. These were planned for the summer term but due to the school closure in March they were unable to take place.</p> <p>During the Period of School Closure: Pupil health and wellbeing became an important focus when school closed, and was supported in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutors remained in regular contact with tutees and families in order to support them • Individualised timetables were designed so that pupil workload was manageable • Health and wellbeing newsletters were emailed to all families • Links to further sources of help and support were sent to all families • Messages from staff were sent to pupils to remind them we were thinking about them • Virtual social meetings were organised for pupils so that they could stay in touch with each other and chat to staff • Books and art equipment were sent home to pupils • A blog was set up to celebrate what pupils were achieving at home and to share news • Two virtual coffee mornings were held for parents and staff • A virtual end-of-term celebration was held for all pupils • Certificates of achievement were emailed to all pupils 	<p>Plan and provide opportunities for walks and activities for increased heart rate. Reiterate the positive impact on the human body and mental health when carrying out such activities.</p> <p>Continue to stay informed of wider national Health and Wellbeing (HWB) issues and ensure that we plan appropriately for them</p> <p>Continue to deliver opportunities for all pupils to engage in HWB</p> <p>Develop health and wellbeing through a focus on Eco Schools</p>

**PROGRESS IN HEALTH AND WELLBEING, LITERACY AND NUMERACY
AS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL
2019-2020**

	Progress	Next Steps
Literacy	<p>Before the school closure in March: Pupils had opportunities to develop literacy skills whilst preparing for our annual charity coffee morning. They worked both independently and collaboratively to organise the event, developing literacy skills by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • researching the charity • writing the text for invites • writing emails to staff • project managing the event through planning meetings <p>A “Book Group” session was again timetabled for a small number of pupils, and this included a visit to the local book shop to select two texts the group wanted to read.</p> <p>Before the period of lockdown, pupils continued to make good use of ICT across all subjects, and had many opportunities to undertake research, write reports and create posters to give information, linking design and layout to purpose and audience. This provides important opportunities for writing for different purposes and developing subject-related vocabulary. It also allows staff to support reading for understanding, and encourage pupils to identify quality, reliable sources, and understand the dangers of plagiarism.</p> <p>Targeted literacy support for pupils continued to be provided through 1:1 Support for Learning sessions.</p> <p>During the Period of School Closure: Literacy was supported through an inaugural online book group to which all S1-S3 pupils were invited. The group focused on a book which was nominated for (and eventually won!) the Carnegie Award. Pupils could attend “live” reading sessions or access the story through recordings. All pupils in S1-S3 were sent a copy of the book to their homes, and although not all pupils wanted to participate in the online group, many of them read the text at home in their own time.</p> <p>Free access to audio books for young women was signposted to eligible pupils.</p> <p>Books were gifted to pupils who found it difficult to engage in remote learning.</p> <p>Targeted support was also provided through live 1:1 reading and support for learning sessions.</p> <p>A laptop was provided to any pupil who required it.</p>	<p>Renew focus on <i>tracking</i> of literacy skills in subjects, in interdisciplinary learning and in opportunities for personal achievement</p> <p>Revise information sheets identifying individual areas for development</p> <p>Re-schedule time for moderation of literacy across subjects</p> <p>Plan and apply for a writer in residence, when infection prevention measures are lifted</p> <p>Continue to develop the reading culture within the school so that all pupils have time to engage in reading for pleasure</p> <p>Develop targeted literacy interventions to reduce barriers to learning at home, should the need arise in the future</p> <p>Develop literacy through a focus on Eco Schools</p>

PROGRESS IN HEALTH AND WELLBEING, LITERACY AND NUMERACY AS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL 2019-2020

	Progress	Next Steps
<p>Numeracy</p>	<p>Before the school closure in March: Broad General Education (BGE) Pupils had opportunities to develop Numeracy skills preparing for and during the annual charity coffee morning. Those who baked worked on Measuring skills and Ratios, while a couple of students helped with the collection of money during the event and counting/banking the money afterwards.</p> <p>In subjects such a Science and Geography, numeracy skills were reinforced by map reading and graphs and data handling.</p> <p>Numeracy is constantly reinforced during Maths lessons by the use of non-calculator starters. These help students apply their numeracy skills to a variety of numerical and problem-solving questions at the beginning of a lesson before moving onto the main topic.</p> <p>Targeted Numeracy support for pupils continued to be provided through 1:1 Support for Learning (SfL) sessions. Some students who, on arrival at Dunedin, demonstrated comparatively poor numerical skills to their other abilities, now no longer require SfL help in this area. Their numeracy skills have improved and they have the confidence to use support strategies where required, enabling them to progress well in their National Qualifications, with one pupil hoping to attempt Higher Maths next session.</p> <p>During the Period of School Closure: BGE pupils were provided with a list of online Maths websites which they could access. These websites use computer style games to help pupils practise their Numeracy skills and some also provide access to more complex mathematical concepts.</p> <p>They were also provided with numeracy booklets and worksheets that they could work through as well as Mathematics work.</p> <p>A laptop was provided to any pupil who required it.</p> <p>Support for learning was available for pupils, however in the end, the main focus for SfL during lockdown was pupils' literacy.</p>	<p>Renew focus on tracking of numeracy skills in subjects, in interdisciplinary learning and in opportunities for personal achievement.</p> <p>Revise information sheets identifying individual areas for development</p> <p>Schedule time for moderation of numeracy across subjects</p> <p>Continue to develop the culture within the school that pupils can be comfortable with making mistakes in their numeracy, and that they are aware of using numeracy in all their subjects.</p> <p>Where required, develop targeted numeracy interventions to reduce barriers to learning at home.</p> <p>Embed feedback and communication structure for students and staff</p> <p>Develop numeracy through a focus on Eco Schools</p>

ATTAINMENT, WIDER ACHIEVEMENT AND TRANSITION IN THE SENIOR PHASE

Attainment

The number of pupils at Dunedin in the senior phase (S4-S6) fluctuates every year, and - as was the case during 2019-2020 - sometimes throughout the year. Some of those pupils may not have arrived at the school until S3 or later. Despite this, all pupils can work towards qualifications, at a pace and level which suits them, and are supported to plan their transition from Dunedin.

We began session 2019-2020 with nine pupils in the senior phase, all of whom were working towards a variety of units and course qualifications, from National 3 to Higher.

The cancellation of all exams in 2020 came as a shock and had an impact on every one of our senior pupils. Many had worked hard to complete and submit coursework which was not then assessed, and our senior pupils did remarkably well to remain engaged when the school closed. Many of them used the time during closure to complete unit tasks, and to focus on transition.

Despite the challenges, between them, our senior phase pupils achieved the following across several subjects:

Course Award	Number Achieved
National 3	2
National 4	12
National 5	12 (Grades A-C)
Additional N4 Freestanding Unit Passes	9
Additional N5 Freestanding Unit Passes	12

We are extremely proud of all of our pupils, and know every result represents a great deal of hard work and perseverance.

ATTAINMENT, WIDER ACHIEVEMENT AND TRANSITION IN THE SENIOR PHASE (contd.)

Wider Achievement

Before closure, the school supported senior pupils to learn and develop skills outwith Dunedin, for example through participation in Edinburgh College's School College Partnership programme, partnership with the Comedy Club, partnership with the Rural and Urban Training Scheme (RUTS), and the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Senior pupils also attended a Young Drivers event at the Edinburgh Corn Exchange, which proved to have great impact, as well as careers fairs at The Royal Highland Centre and Corn Exchange. Familiarisation visits to Edinburgh College were supported before closure according to individual need.

We have a very well-established relationship with Skills Development Scotland and all of our senior pupils benefited from regular one-to-one transition planning meetings with our link person before school closed.

Although opportunities for work experience and work shadowing were curtailed this year, some pupils did manage work or volunteering experience, including a week spent with the SSPCA. Some planned work experience and collaboration with Duddingston Gardens had to be postponed as a result of the pandemic.

The school's partnerships with organisations is always driven by the needs and aspirations of the pupils and therefore change every year.

Transition

Despite the difficulties caused by spending the final school term in lockdown, our leavers and their tutors continued with enhanced transition work. Regular meetings with pupils and their families, our Skills Development Scotland link person and other professionals were held online, and tutors oversaw applications to Edinburgh College, or to other support organisations.

Jen Laing, one of our learning assistants, was also appointed as a part-time Transition Support Co-ordinator in the final term and began work to support those pupils who were moving on from Dunedin. Her support will continue for six months after the pupils leave Dunedin to ensure our leavers are settled in their new destinations.

Of the seven senior phase pupils who left in June, five secured places on courses at Edinburgh College, and two are working with other organisations in preparation for moving on to college or work next year.

We wish all our leavers well. This has been an incredibly difficult and stressful year for them, and we are very proud of the resilience they have shown and of everything they have achieved.

HIGHLIGHTS OF PUPILS' EXPERIENCES AND WIDER ACHIEVEMENT 2019-2020

One of Dunedin School's priorities is to encourage pupils to take part in a wide range of activities outwith the classroom. Staff support pupils to engage in activities which they may not have had the opportunity to experience before, or may in the past have been reluctant to engage with. This helps to build pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem, helps to develop important life skills and leads to many personal achievements and individual successes.

These experiences are also vital in delivering aspects of the National Improvement Framework, particularly improvement in children's and young people's health and wellbeing, and developing employability skills.

Extra-curricular activities are open to all pupils. The school is committed to removing the barriers which might prevent pupils from participating, as well as to gently encouraging them so that they develop the confidence to give new activities a go.

Despite the closure, there were many such activities on offer during the first two terms of last session, some of which are listed below:

- A programme of sporting and recreational activities for Tuesday and Friday afternoons, including badminton, swimming, walks, film club, board games, music and dance, and visits to Craigmillar Castle
- Scottish country dancing at Inch House to celebrate St Andrew's Day
- Our annual charity coffee morning, this year in aid of Cancer Research UK
- A week of interdisciplinary learning on the theme of "A Healthy Heart", during which pupils engaged in a range of activities, including analysing staff food diaries, participating in daily walks, learning about the heart and circulation in Science and researching the use of the heart as a symbol and writing found poetry in English
- Participation in the annual Into Film festival, with a trip to see "Fighting With My Family", which raised issues around gender stereotyping, class, perseverance and resilience, and family loyalty
- Continuing collaboration with Drake Music
- Continuing collaboration with Drum Riding for the Disabled to provide experience of working with and riding horses
- Collaboration with the Green Team, to learn basic survival skills, plant and wildlife identification, use of tools such as saws and knives, woodland conservation, fire lighting and cooking, as well as exploring the woodland
- Welcoming the organisation "Solutions not Sides" who spoke to PSE classes about the Palestinian/Israeli situation and discussed potential solutions to the crisis that respected and included all sides
- A visit to Dynamic Earth with S1-S3 pupils to raise awareness of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) opportunities around Edinburgh and Scotland
- A Science and Geography trip to the National Museum of Scotland to find out about malaria, and how it spreads
- Science and Geography field trips to Inch Park

HIGHLIGHTS OF PUPILS' EXPERIENCES AND WIDER ACHIEVEMENT 2019-2020 (contd.)

- A trip to Edinburgh Zoo to learn about biodiversity
- Arts and cultural events such as a visit to the Scottish National Art Gallery
- Pupil Council meetings
- A Christmas trip to the Lyceum Theatre to see "A Christmas Carol"
- Motorcycle maintenance sessions for senior pupils with RUTS

These trips and events focus on challenge and enjoyment. Not only do they provide opportunities for pupils to develop friendships and just have some fun, but they are invaluable for taking learning outside of the classroom, sometimes in unfamiliar and challenging environments, and they help us to deliver important initiatives such as Developing the Young Workforce.

More detail can be found on the school website about these and other activities in which our pupils have participated.

SELF-EVALUATION AND CAPACITY FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The school's self-evaluation process involves every member of staff. The annual whole-school evaluation usually takes place in May, using the HMIE document *How Good is our School?* (4th Edition) and the National Improvement Framework priorities and key drivers.

In normal circumstances, all schools are required to evaluate the following quality indicators from *How Good is our School?* (4th Edition) on an annual basis:

- **1.3 Leadership of Change**
- **2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment**
- **3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equity and inclusion**
- **3.2 Raising attainment and achievement**

Because of the challenging circumstances we find ourselves in, staff have taken the decision to return to these four quality indicators later in the year, when time permits.

This year, as a result of school closure, our whole-school evaluation has been very different. We felt that our focus had to be on evaluating our response to the lockdown, our support for pupils and families, and what we need to learn from it.

We carried out our evaluation through staff and family questionnaires, online discussion and feedback from staff professional review meetings.

We chose to focus on:

- **Teaching from and Learning at Home**
- **Support for Pupil, Family and Staff Wellbeing**
- **Building and Sustaining a Professional Staff Team**

Our self-evaluation helped us to identify areas of strength and areas for development in teaching and learning and the care of our pupils as we move in to the next session and focus on recovery from school closure.

The questionnaires highlighted the following as areas of key strength:

- **A strong and continued focus on pupil wellbeing**
- **Good communication between tutors and home, by whatever means best suited individual families**
- **Staff adapted quickly and embraced new digital learning platforms**
- **Continued support for transitions**

Comments and suggestions made by staff, parents, and pupils about how we might make further improvements have helped to inform the School Recovery Plan for session 2020-2021.

A brief summary of this session's evaluation can be found below:

SELF-EVALUATION AND CAPACITY FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT (*contd.*)

Area of Focus	Areas of Strength	Areas for Development
Teaching from and learning at home	<p>Pupils</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did their best to engage under difficult circumstances • Our main focus was on pupil wellbeing and supporting families • Some pupils enjoyed working from home and having some control over what they did and when. We can build on this • Some pupils made progress in National courses despite lack of face-to-face teaching (at N4, N5 and Higher level), demonstrating independence in learning • Pupils had opportunities to access the curriculum by more creative means • Pupils had more choice and greater freedom • Some were able to produce good evidence of learning by which teachers could measure progress • Some developed important skills during the school closure - planning, organising, taking responsibility for their learning, becoming less reliant on the teacher, having a go, problem solving, developing digital literacy, resilience etc. <p>Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapted to an unusual teaching situation • Faced practical, emotional and psychological challenges • Took on new roles • Ensured digital inclusion • Focused on the individual needs of pupils - work became almost entirely differentiated according to need • Kept in close contact with families to monitor how things were going • Co-ordinated ourselves well as a team • Continued to work with external partners/agencies such as SQA, SCIS, SDS, EPs etc • Had opportunities to work on areas of expertise i.e. Google Classroom • Had the technology to help us to continue teaching and excellent IT support • Had freedom to focus on 1:1, especially for senior phase • Learned many new skills • Overcame problems • Became more creative in what we taught and how we taught it • Used additional/alternative platforms such as FutureLearn to engage pupils in online learning • Began to embrace the opportunities that online learning, and removal of the context of the classroom, can bring 	<p>Ensuring we engage <i>all</i> pupils in online learning without overwhelming them</p> <p>Ensuring pupils are not excluded as a result of literacy, numeracy or digital skills</p> <p>Providing an engaging curriculum, particularly for BGE pupils, which is not wholly reliant on IT</p> <p>Helping all pupils to develop resilience and independent learning skills</p> <p>Ensuring all pupils/families have access to the equipment and space to learn that they need</p> <p>Ongoing training, support and guidance for remote learning - for staff, pupils and parents</p> <p>Ensuring we maintain an overview of pupils' engagement if we revert to remote learning</p>

SELF-EVALUATION AND CAPACITY FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT (contd.)

Area of Focus	Areas of Strength	Areas for Development
Support for Pupil, Family and Staff Wellbeing	<p>Pupils and Families</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff focused on the individual needs of pupils • Pupils were issued with tailored timetables after the Easter holidays and families were consulted to ensure these were appropriate • Staff were sensitive to family circumstances • Tutors kept in close contact with families to monitor how things were going • We tried to avoid overwhelming pupils with too much work, but also responded quickly if parents asked for more • We were able to supply pupils with school laptops if they needed them • In some cases, the tutor/tutee relationship has benefitted from this more hands on/personalised approach • Staff continued to work with external partners/agencies such as SQA, SCIS, SDS, EPs etc to ensure transition work continued and other support was in place • Staff could work one-to-one with pupils using Google Meet • Staff facilitated virtual social meet ups for pupils • End of term was celebrated with an online party • Parents were invited to informal online coffee mornings with staff • Health and wellbeing newsletters were issued to pupils and families • Links to other supports were highlighted • The school blog was used to celebrate achievement • Books and art materials were sent home to pupils • We were able to deliver one-to-one lessons to pupils using Google Classroom • The school administrator continued to be a central point of contact, particularly for parents of new pupils <p>Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff received training to use Google Classroom • There was good IT support for staff • All staff had the IT equipment they needed to continue to work from home • Regular meetings allowed staff to stay in touch • A staff wellbeing group was set up • Professional review groups met • Staff could participate in online professional development • Staff could take on new roles and new challenges • Staff who needed to shield before lockdown were able to do so 	<p>Establish other means of contact and communication with families in the new term, when they cannot come in to school, to ensure they feel included and involved</p> <p>Ensure we can reach all families through their preferred means of communication</p> <p>Evaluate how we communicate with pupils if learning at home. Email can be overwhelming</p> <p>Ensuring we build in adequate support for staff wellbeing</p>

SELF-EVALUATION AND CAPACITY FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT (*contd.*)

Area of Focus	Areas of Strength	Areas for Development
Building and Sustaining a Professional Staff Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many staff had opportunities to take on new roles • Learned many new skills • Adapted and overcame problems • Were flexible • Maintained communication via email, Google Meet, and Zoom • Became more creative in what we taught and how we taught it • Maintained a focus on pupils' learning and wellbeing • Introduced new initiatives such as an online book group and virtual "break times" • Had a willingness to learn, and engaged in professional development online throughout the period of closure • Continued with professional review and development, and self and whole-school evaluation • Maintained links with other professionals and continued working according to GIRFEC guidelines • Managed Transitions 	<p>Ensuring staff are able to achieve an appropriate work balance</p> <p>Ensuring all staff feel included and are part of the team</p> <p>Sharing the challenges of teaching in new circumstances</p> <p>Ensuring we build in adequate support for staff wellbeing</p> <p>Rethinking our means of communication in changed circumstances</p> <p>Rethinking the division of management tasks and spreading the workload more equitably</p> <p>Ensuring all staff have the skills, training and confidence to use technology to deliver their subject</p> <p>Ensuring we have a shared understanding of how blended learning will work should the need for it arise again</p> <p>Re-evaluating our approach to managing the school</p>

SCHOOL PRIORITIES FOR 2020-2021

The whole-school evaluation process undertaken in May helps us to identify the school's improvement priorities for the next session, 2020-2021. As we are still in the midst of the pandemic, planning for next session will focus on recovery, particularly teaching in the new term, in accordance with Scottish Government guidance.

From the questionnaires, and through whole-school discussion, we have identified the following as our priorities over the coming session. However, anything and everything we do will be subject to the restrictions imposed on us as a result of the pandemic, and the safety of our pupils and staff will always take precedence.

School Improvement Priority 1:		
Parental Engagement		
Link to Recovery Planning Guidelines	Link to National Improvement Framework Priorities and Drivers	Link to How Good is our School? (4th Edition)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuity of provision under changed circumstances • Supporting student and staff health and wellbeing • Transitions at all levels • Remedying any impact that there has been around the widening of inequalities of outcome experienced by children and young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy • Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children • Improvement in children's and young people's health and wellbeing • Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people • Parental engagement • School Improvement 	<p>Learning Provision 2.4: <i>Personalised Support</i> 2.5: <i>Family Learning</i> 2.6: <i>Transitions</i> 2.7: <i>Partnerships</i></p>
Target/Outcome/Desired Impact:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To support parents and carers to actively and meaningfully engage in their children's learning and life at school • To work with parents and carers to reduce potential barriers to engagement • To engage with parents and carers in a regular, supportive, informative and caring manner • To actively engage parents and carers in transitions at all stages of learning. 		

SCHOOL PRIORITIES FOR 2020-2021
(contd.)

School Improvement Priority 2:		
Improving Independent Learning Skills		
Link to Recovery Planning Guidelines	Link to National Improvement Framework Priorities and Drivers	Link to How Good is our School? (4th Edition)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuity of provision under changed circumstances • Identifying gaps in learning • What can be done to remedy any impact that there has been around the widening of inequalities of outcome experienced by children and young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy • Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children • Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people • Parental Engagement • School Improvement 	<p>Learning Provision 2.3: <i>Learning, teaching and assessment</i> 2.4: <i>Personalised support</i></p>
<p>Target/Outcome/Desired Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All pupils have the skills and confidence to engage in learning whether in school or at home • All pupils know how to access and download work at home and in class through Google Classroom • Individual barriers to independence in learning are identified, and support is in place to reduce these • There is a shared expectation that pupils can and should continue to learn at home in the event of closure • Pupils and staff have confidence that there will be a seamless move from working at school to working at home • Staff are able to measure and track engagement when pupils are working at home 		

SCHOOL PRIORITIES FOR 2020-2021
(contd.)

School Improvement Priority 3:		
Developing the Staff Team		
Link to Recovery Planning Guidelines	Link to National Improvement Framework Priorities and Drivers	Link to How Good is our School? (4th Edition)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recovery • Continuity of provision under changed circumstances • Supporting student and staff health and wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy • Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children • Improvement in children's and young people's health and wellbeing • Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people • School leadership • Teacher professionalism • School Improvement 	<p>Leadership and Management 1.3: <i>Leadership of change</i> 1.4: <i>Leadership and management of staff</i></p>
Target/Outcome/Desired Impact:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff can fulfil their roles knowing that responsibility and workload has been shared equally • There are clear management procedures that ensure staff can support each other and fulfil their own roles enabling them to access relevant help/support to do their job effectively • The flat management structure is optimised to support the school and clear procedures are in place to support escalation when other approaches are required 		

SCHOOL PRIORITIES FOR 2020-2021 (contd.)

School Improvement Priority 4:		
Sustainability		
Link to Recovery Planning Guidelines	Link to National Improvement Framework Priorities and Drivers	Link to How Good is our School? (4th Edition)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recovery • Continuity of provision under changed circumstances • Supporting student and staff health and wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy • Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people • Teacher professionalism • School Improvement 	<p>Leadership and Management <i>1.1 Self-evaluation for self-improvement</i> <i>1.2 Leadership of Learning</i></p> <p>Learning Provision <i>2.2: Curriculum</i></p> <p>Successes and Achievements <i>3.3: Increasing Creativity and Employability</i></p>
<p>Target/Outcome/Desired Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff and pupils have a greater understanding of Learning for Sustainability (LfS) and how they can positively contribute • This understanding has positively changed the way we think and make decisions • The school works towards achieving an Eco Flag award • Learning for Sustainability becomes firmly embedded in our curriculum 		

In addition to these main priorities, staff will carry forward a number of actions and tasks which could not be completed as a result of school closure, and respond to any guidance issued by the Scottish Government in relation to the pandemic.

STAFFING AND GOVERNANCE

News and a Vote of Thanks

Staffing

Without a doubt, staff - like everyone else - have been tested this year, personally and professionally. School closure was difficult enough for longstanding members of staff, but must have been especially difficult for the two new members of staff we had only just welcomed in January.

Following their successful interviews, Steve Begarnie and Anis Saleh took up a job-sharing role to teach Chemistry, Biology and Science after Sheila Ford made the difficult decision to relinquish her teaching commitments. Steve and Anis have certainly had a bit of a baptism by fire, but have settled in remarkably well, formed good relationships with the pupils, and have brought new perspectives and fresh thinking to the staff team.

Libby Ketley, who had been providing supply cover for science, took up a teaching position in Aberdeenshire, and we wish her luck and success in this new role.

Sheila has retained her role overseeing finance, so we continue to benefit from her wisdom and experience, which was especially appreciated during the period of closure.

Jen Laing, our learning assistant, took up additional responsibilities as Transition Support Co-ordinator, and has been working with our leavers, both online and by phone, to support them through what is an incredibly challenging time. She has also already begun work with the current senior phase pupils and we feel this will be invaluable in helping us to improve their experience of moving on when the time comes.

Governors

As always, we end by acknowledging how hard working and committed the governors have been since Dunedin became a charity in 2000. Over the past year, in particular, they have not only helped and supported us to navigate school closure, but assisted us with other vital administrative work behind the scenes. Staff are incredibly grateful for their hard work this session. Their continued support for the staff, and of the school's ethos and vision in general, is crucial to the school's success.