

**DUNEDIN SCHOOL**

*Delivers unique education to individuals*

**Parent and Pupil  
Handbook**

**2023-2024**

**Welcome to**

# **DUNEDIN SCHOOL**

## **Background**

Dunedin School is a small independent school providing education for young people experiencing a range of social and emotional difficulties. The school was established as The Dunedin Co-operative in 1979 and operated out of Millar Hall. In 2000, the school became a Company Limited by Guarantee, and a registered charity in Scotland. A period of planning and fundraising followed and in 2007, the school moved into Liberton Bank House, a building of historical and literary importance, after it had been renovated and adapted to our purposes.

## **Support for Pupils**

Dunedin is a “second chance” school for those for whom mainstream schooling was found to be inappropriate. Many pupils arrive with experience of failure – this can be as a result of learning difficulties, medical concerns, or due to personal, social or emotional problems.

It is central to the Dunedin Ethos that, irrespective of a pupil’s previous learning experiences, the individual placed at Dunedin should benefit from tailored teaching in a supportive environment. It is the central guiding principle of the school that a high priority is placed on meeting the needs of and nurturing the individual. For this reason the teachers exercise a more flexible and cooperative way of working than would be the norm in a mainstream school.

Our immediate concern is to build up the individual’s self-respect, self confidence and self worth by offering a caring and supportive alternative education. We wish the young people to recognise Dunedin as their second chance school where the individual will be respected. A sense of belonging, personal worth, care and toleration of others is encouraged at all times. The relationship between the staff and pupils is more informal than mainstream and the pupils call the staff by their first names.

## **The Curriculum**

The school provides a wide curriculum of examinable and non-examinable subjects. The school's flexible approach to learning allows pupils to develop at their own pace and can adapt to a pupil's specific needs. In addition, the high staff-to-pupil ratio and small-group teaching also caters for the individual's needs.

The timetable is carefully constructed to provide a curriculum that suits each individual as closely as possible and caters for learning needs. The teaching groups are carefully considered to create a calm learning environment in which the pupils can reap maximum benefit. Groups are formed through negotiation with all staff and, although a group usually comprises pupils working at similar levels, the ability to co-operate as a group is also important.

### **Examinable subjects:**

- English
- Mathematics, Lifeskills Mathematics and Personal Finance
- Environmental Science, Biology, Chemistry and Physics
- Computer Science
- Geography
- History
- Home Economics/Hospitality
- Art, Photography
- Modern Studies
- Physics

### **Non-examinable subjects:**

- Lifeskills
- Citizenship
- Comparative Religions
- CDT
- Current Affairs
- Personal and Social Education
- Sport
- Enterprise Group

Pupils are only presented for national qualifications and examinations if it is appropriate and at a suitable level. The school will enter pupils for Nationals 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, Highers. Units are also offered in most subjects and at a variety of levels. These can be in addition to, or as an alternative to external examinations.

## **Teaching Groups**

The pupils are taught in small groups of 3-5 and can have individual tuition within the group or be taught a subject lesson as a small class. In both cases, differentiation and additional support for learning are automatically incorporated.

## **Pupil Progress**

Pupil progress is regularly updated and reviewed. Reports are sent out before the two parents' evenings held in the autumn and spring terms. We keep an open-door policy throughout the school year and parents are encouraged to phone or email if they have any queries or concerns about their child's progress.

YPPMs (Young People's Planning Meetings) are held at least once a year for all pupils and more regularly if required, especially during S4-S6, to ensure pupils make the transition to a positive destination. At this time advice is taken from educational psychologists, Skills Development Scotland, social workers and any other professionals involved.

## **Pastoral Care**

We appreciate that pastoral care is very important and pupil wellbeing is at the core of everything we do.

We operate a tutor system which means that each pupil is allocated a particular member of staff. This teacher has responsibility for all aspects of pastoral care and keeps in close contact with the parents/carers.

## **Positive Destinations**

The school has an allocated a careers advisor from Skills Development Scotland who meets with pupils in S3 and above. They give advice and guidance on college courses, Activity Agreements and can offer suggestions for possible employment.

Work experience placements are normally done in S4 or above. The school will help the pupils find suitable work placements and try to support the pupil to attend this placement.

The school will help a pupil become confident in attending college by arranging college tasters and accompanying him or her on initial visits to the college.

## **Code of Conduct**

The pupils have written their own Code of Conduct:

- Think of others as well as yourself
- Be aware of the language you use
- Don't shout if not necessary
- No physical abuse!
- Help each other
- Treat others as you would like to be treated yourself
- Be understanding and compassionate
- Represent the school well
- Respect the school environment– treat the buildings, equipment and grounds well
- Be tolerant of others
- Try not to take your issues/problems out on others
- Be willing to try
- Be patient

We have a robust Child Protection Policy which helps school staff to support and protect the pupils, particularly those who are most vulnerable. It also serves as a resource for staff giving guidance on practice and key issues in child protection. For any child protection issues please contact Cathy Murray (Child Protection Co-ordinator) or Amanda Butters (Deputy Child Protection Co-ordinator).

## **Lunch and Break Times**

It is the school's policy to allow pupils to go to Cameron Toll Shopping Centre at break and lunch times. This is of course subject to the pupils' behaviour being acceptable both in school and at the shopping centre. If it is unacceptable then this privilege will immediately be withdrawn. Pupils

can also bring a packed lunch to school and sit in one of the classrooms or in the school grounds.

Some families may be eligible for free school meals. If you feel your child might be eligible then please look at your local council's website under school grants.

## **Outdoor Education and Transport**

Outdoor education and school trips play an important part in pupils' personal and educational experience at Dunedin including field trips, sporting activities and arts events and an annual residential trip. Pupils are transported on these outings in a staff member's own vehicle and parents are asked to sign a consent form at the beginning of each year.

## **Mobile Phones**

The increasing benefits of mobile phones and other digital devices are recognised. Pupils are expected to use these devices responsibly and sensibly while in school and to follow the instruction of staff. Phones and digital devices can only be used at break and lunch times (unless a teacher allows their use as part of the lesson). Pupils are not to take photos of or film other pupils.

## **Health**

The school follows current Scottish Government guidelines and we do not allow high energy and high caffeine drinks in school. Parents are asked to support us in this and not send any such drinks in to school.

All pupils will be offered routine immunisations and can be referred for medical support and advice to the School Health Service.

## **Any Problems and Suggestions**

Dunedin School welcomes suggestions and comments from parents/carers and takes seriously any concerns they may raise. If you have an issue you would like to discuss, please speak to Rosie Galloway, School Administrator, in the first instance who will try to resolve the issue as quickly as possible or if it is more complex will investigate it further. Dunedin School recognises and acknowledges your entitlement to complain and we hope to work with you in the best interest of the young people in our school.

## **Organisation and Staff**

Dunedin School operates as a co-operative in which there is a flat management structure. The staff work co-operatively within a team as a means of managing school tasks and delivering a comprehensive curriculum to all pupils. Dunedin School currently employs 10 part time Teachers, 1 Finance Manager, 1 IT Manager, 1 Administrator, 1 Transitions Coordinator and 2 Classroom Assistants.

### **The current Dunedin staff are:**

English	Elaine Foulner
Mathematics, Lifeskills Mathematics	Kiri Lo
Environmental Science, Chemistry, Physics	Drew King
Environmental Science, Biology, Computing	Amanda Butters
Computer Science	Anastasia Raftopoulou
Geography, Modern Studies	Cathy Murray
History, Modern Studies and PSE	Alison Bennett
Art	Nikki Jamieson
Home Economics & Life Skills	Gill Hinton
Art & Design, CDT, Photography, SFL	Anne Gatherar
Finance Management	Gill Hinton
IT Management	Paul Gardner
School Administrator	Rosie Galloway
Transition Co-ordinator	Jen Laing
Classroom Assistant	Chris Cartwright
	Clare Coyle

### **The current Board of Governors are:**

Fiona Ferguson (Chair)  
Lesley Beddie  
Jeremy Chittleburgh  
Angela Jesudason  
Charles McGregor  
Campbell Paterson  
Rhona Trotter

## **Dates for Session 2023-2024**

Classes start at 9.00am and run through to 3.00pm every day.

### **Autumn Term 2023**

#### **Start of Term**

Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> August

#### **Half Term**

Monday 16<sup>th</sup> October to Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October inclusive

#### **End of Term**

Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December 12 noon

### **Spring Term 2024**

#### **Start of Term**

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January

#### **Half Term**

Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February to Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February inclusive

#### **End of Term**

Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 12.15pm

### **Summer Term 2024**

#### **Start of Term**

Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April

#### **Half Term**

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> May – Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May inclusive

#### **End of Term**

Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> June 12 noon

#### **Contact us at:**

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