



GEORGE
WATSON'S
— COLLEGE —

PROSPECTUS





EX CORDE CARITAS

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—
LOVE FROM THE HEART

*“At Watson’s we measure success as much
by what our pupils are as by what they can do.
We aim to ensure that every Watsonian
leaves us as a confident, capable and engaged
young adult, eager to make his or her
unique contribution to the world.*

*Our expectations of our pupils are simple:
Challenge Yourself; Care for Others”*

MELVYN ROFFE
PRINCIPAL

excellence in diversity

Spend just a short time with us and you will quickly sense the spirit of excitement, the breadth of opportunity, the aspiration to achieve and the feeling of warmth that characterises our School. Look a little closer and you will find that Watson's is a diverse community, encompassing children with a range of talents, abilities and personal qualities.





Pupils thrive at Watson's because we provide an environment that is encouraging, challenging and supportive. We want our pupils to see that learning itself is as important as the examination results it produces. Every experience is an opportunity to improve and the desire to learn must never be blocked by the fear of failure.

Proudly co-educational for over 40 years, we encourage pupils to be comfortable with diversity and respect the qualities of others. The breadth of life and learning helps our pupils develop into versatile young adults with open and enquiring minds, ready for life in a world that will require them to interact with many different people in a range of situations.

Throughout a childhood at Watson's, there will always be something new to try, new friendships to make, and new adventures to share.

**Watson's helps
pupils develop into
versatile young
adults**

the Watson's family

The success of our pupils is supported by close relationships between the School, our pupils' parents and the wider Watson's community. This goes well beyond the formal aspects of school life, extending into social, sporting and other extra-curricular activities. Indeed, it is this shared involvement in the life of the School that is at the core of what is often referred to as the 'Watson's family'.



EX CORDE CARITAS – LOVE FROM THE HEART



Beyond the classroom, the informal curriculum provides an opportunity to draw on the combined experience and expertise of our parents, our teachers and our support staff.

An important aspect of the 'Watson's Family' is the work of the George Watson's Family Foundation. The Foundation can provide support for families whose children would benefit from an education at Watson's but who would not otherwise be able to afford the fees.

**The George Watson's
Family Foundation
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a single campus

With over 50 acres of parkland campus situated near the centre of one of Europe's most beautiful cities, we offer our pupils the benefits of a close-knit community in one inclusive and integrated location.



MAKE THE MOST OF WHAT IS AVAILABLE TO YOU – OUR CHARTER



Our environment helps our pupils to make a gradual progression from their earliest years towards their preparations for life after Senior School.

The single campus ensures that everything is easily accessible, even sports fixtures. Our campus also provides a sense of cohesion between Junior School and Senior School and makes dropping off pupils of different ages simple.

By August 2019 a significant development of the Junior School will provide outstanding new accommodation for our Nursery pupils, a brand new Library and Music Suite, as well as new classrooms for Primary 7.

The Centre for Sport is a first-class learning environment as well as supporting our programme of extra-curricular competitive sport and providing health and leisure facilities for the School and wider community.

It boasts two sports halls, gymnasium facilities, a swimming pool and the excellent Pentland Fitness Suite. It was officially opened by the most celebrated of all Watsonian sports stars, Sir Chris Hoy.

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exploring together

For many of our pupils, life at Watson's begins in their pre-school year in our Nursery.

Our facilities provide a secure, intimate but stimulating environment for our youngest children at an exciting and formative time in their development. From the very outset, our goal is to provide a sound foundation for learning with a fully qualified teacher in every nursery classroom, supported by trained nursery practitioners.



RESPECT THE PROPERTY OF THE SCHOOL AND THAT OF OTHER PEOPLE – OUR CHARTER



Whilst the emphasis in our Nursery is on learning through play, each activity is carefully planned to address aspects of development, including Health and Wellbeing, Numeracy and Literacy. From fixed outdoor play equipment to the use of IT, our resources are designed to stimulate the senses, and children are encouraged to develop questioning and thinking skills, concentration, and self-motivation.

As well as gaining confidence from this environment, children benefit from outings, both on and off campus, developing an awareness of the wider community.

Nursery Plus is an extension of the pre-school day providing care both before and after nursery and during the holidays. The service is designed to meet the needs of parents by offering extended hours for children in an attractive facility on the campus.

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encouraging growth

The Junior School provides an excellent education for children up to Primary 7.

This enables children to become successful learners, responsible citizens, effective contributors and confident individuals. These are principles to which Watson's has long adhered, with a proven track record of success.

Our wraparound care for Junior School pupils – Breakfast Club, After School Club and Holiday Club – provides continuing support for our families' working lives.



TREAT OTHER PEOPLE THE WAY YOU WISH TO BE TREATED – OUR CHARTER



Each year, five mixed ability Primary 1 classes are created which include many pupils who have attended our Nursery and some who have not. These groups remain constant until the end of Primary 4 when a reorganisation into new class groups widens the pupils' social networks before they progress to Senior School. From August 2018, a sixth Primary 6 class will be created for pupils joining the School in that year. This is in addition to the extra Primary 7 class which has traditionally been provided.

Central to the pupils' intellectual, emotional and social development is English Language, which has an essential role across the curriculum. In Mathematics, we seek to provide our pupils with a mathematical 'toolkit' of concepts, facts and techniques, and to offer progressively challenging experiences in which to develop their problem-solving and enquiry skills. In Science, Social Subjects and the Technologies, we aim to develop not only pupils' knowledge and understanding but also the skills they require to investigate and comprehend the world around them. All pupils learn French through the Junior School from Primary 3 and also have the opportunity of learning Spanish from Primary 5. Additionally, Primary 3 pupils can take advantage of an extra-curricular Chinese Club held before school.

The use of technology for learning is gradually introduced through the School. From Primary 5 all Junior School pupils are provided with an iPad for their own use.

We know that happy and motivated children are the most successful learners so we strive to make learning enjoyable and engaging throughout. Our Junior School Assistants support teachers and pupils at all stages in the Junior School, enabling innovative teaching both in and out of the classroom.

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inspiring individuals

Arrival at Senior School is a significant moment and we make sure that all pupils, whether joining from the Junior School or from other schools are supported in this key transition. Our induction aims to make this step exciting for our pupils, to help them to establish friendships and to allow us to get to know our pupils and for them to get to know us as quickly as possible. In Senior 1, there is a very popular S1 Orientation visit which enables pupils and staff to become acquainted with each other out of the School context. Learning and teaching in the Senior School is enhanced by all pupils having access to their own personal electronic device under our 'Bring Your Own Device' initiative. This is designed to enable pupils to learn to use technology appropriately and responsibly as they develop their own approach to individual learning.



THINK OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF WHAT YOU SAY AND DO – OUR CHARTER



In Senior 1 and Senior 2, a diverse and stimulating curriculum balances challenging academic progression with a variety of learning experiences. Pupils study many of their subjects in their forms but are banded in English and Mathematics. This enables them to progress at a pace that provides the appropriate level of challenge and also the opportunity to mix with the rest of their year group. Our innovative curriculum model encourages pupils to understand the connections between subjects whilst ensuring that they are taught by teachers who are specialists in and enthusiasts about their subject areas.

From Senior 2, when pupils start to discuss their personal targets and study options with teachers. We provide expert guidance to ensure that they choose subjects and levels that match their abilities and aspirations.

We are proud of the exceptionally broad range of certificate courses we offer. Available at various levels of certification within the Scottish Qualifications Framework, our extensive provision includes subjects across the spectrum of Arts, Sciences and Social Sciences, with a notably wide selection of Modern Languages, including Mandarin Chinese.

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Pupils entering Fifth Year are able to choose between Highers and the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme

Uniquely for a school in Scotland, pupils entering Fifth Year are able to choose between Highers and the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme.

This means that we can cater for the needs of a wide range of pupils, whether they see their futures in Scotland or whether they are one of the increasing number of pupils who expect their university and professional careers to take them around the world.

We offer the opportunity for pupils from outside Edinburgh to attend Watson's in the Fifth and Sixth Year on a 'Homestay' basis.

The academic year for Fifth and Sixth Year pupils begins with the Watson's Festival of Ideas, a month-long exploration of a moral or philosophical theme with lectures and seminars led by staff members and prominent guest speakers. Our annual Caritas Lecture provides an opportunity for the School community to hear from a leading academic or public figure.

Opportunities such as the International Baccalaureate and the Festival of Ideas are amongst the many ways in which we support and encourage pupils to develop their intellectual skills and interests and make themselves attractive candidates to some of the world's most prestigious universities.



support for learning

Support for Learning at Watson's is nationally renowned. A close partnership between experienced and skilled professionals, the pupil and their parents helps develop an approach tailored to the individual, from the early years through to Sixth Year.



SUPPORT AND INCLUDE OTHERS WITHIN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY – OUR CHARTER



Wherever a need is identified, this partnership strives to enable the pupil to find success within the context of a broad and stimulating curriculum.

In the Junior School, for our younger children, early intervention seeks to tackle any potential barriers to learning as soon as possible.

As our children progress, pupils with identified needs are supported both in class and through small group tuition. Specialist IT resources and planned interventions help pupils to become confident and independent learners who are able to help make decisions about their own learning. Provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language is also tailored to the needs of each pupil.

Watson's has an open presentation policy which means that pupils are never barred from taking examinations for fear of affecting performance statistics. Instead they are helped and supported to sit the examinations of their choice.

Our own Sixth Year pupils make an invaluable contribution to Support for Learning, acting as readers and scribes and working with class teachers to support individuals or small groups of pupils. In this respect, as in many others, they are first-class role models for our younger pupils.

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beyond the classroom

We believe an excellent education requires both endeavour and achievement in the classroom and beyond. This drives our commitment to a rich and rewarding informal curriculum.

One of the benefits of our size is that we can offer over 80 extra-curricular clubs and activities which are supported by our dedicated teaching and support staff, along with many parents, former pupils and other members of our community.



BE INDIVIDUAL AND MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD – OUR CHARTER



Whether a pupil has interests that are artistic, literary, musical, political, philosophical or sporting, Watson's has so much to offer. Our role is to help our pupils discover and develop their particular set of interests and aptitudes.

Each year we are entertained by plays, musicals and concerts, which showcase the talents throughout the School. Our Debating Society fosters successful national and international debaters and our Pipes and Drums have an international reputation for excellence.

Sport is an important part of life for many pupils at Watson's. The high participation rate means that we achieve regular sporting success at local, national and international level in sports such as cricket, hockey, rowing, rugby and tennis.

In recognising achievement, we celebrate everyone's contribution. For every pupil who shines on stage, in the chorus or as part of the orchestra, another is making a vital contribution to the stage crew, costume team or front of house. For each sportsman or woman who represents Scotland, there are many others whose loyalty on Saturday mornings is equally part of the Watson's sporting ethos.

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instilling confidence

Ask our pupils, teachers and parents about the Watson's experience, and you will quickly understand the impact of S3 Projects, the two weeks in the Summer Term when small groups of Third Year pupils take to the outdoors for a journey of discovery, challenge and adventure. S3 Projects is indicative of our conviction that education should be a rounded set of experiences both in and out of the classroom. The result is a life-changing experience for the pupils and a significant step towards maturity, with many continuing to develop their love of outdoor pursuits by embarking upon The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.



RESPECT AND PRESERVE THE ENVIRONMENT – OUR CHARTER



S3 Projects is a unique aspect of life with us at Watson's which has been an annual feature of the third year of Senior School since 1962 and is a powerful force in pupils' development. It is also important in fostering the mutually respectful rapport between staff and pupils which is such a feature of the School.

The excitement of learning outside the classroom starts in our Junior School, where from an early age children will find themselves exploring first the campus, and then further afield. Our programme of residential trips in the Junior School, starting with a visit to York in Primary 4 and culminating with a week in London in Primary 7, builds on these early experiences.

All pupils in Senior 2 can undertake an international visit, which might be to France, Germany or Spain – or further afield to our partner school in Taiwan. Pupils from Senior 3 upwards have an ever-increasing range of international options, including a generously subsidised exchange scheme with schools in Melbourne, Australia, exchanges with schools in a variety of other countries and the opportunity to apply for a Scholarship to Hamilton College, a leading US College for a 'Gap Year'. Independent travel by our leavers can be supported by numerous travel award schemes administered by the School.

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preparing for life

For all our pupils, whether they are with us from Nursery or join us in Senior School, their time at Watson's will play a significant part in their journey into adulthood. We share with parents a responsibility for providing a solid foundation on which to build as our young people progress from Watson's to future study and the challenges of the world they will inherit.



ACHIEVE YOUR POTENTIAL BY WORKING HARD – OUR CHARTER



Supporting personal development is key, and the happiness and wellbeing of our pupils is something to which all our staff are committed. Our ambition is to develop well-educated, mature, responsible, motivated and happy young people.

Pastoral care is an integral part of everyday life here, and is supported by a formal guidance structure that ensures a high level of individual care and attention.

Watson's has a strong record of performance in national examinations and we take pride in the levels of excellence achieved each year, as well as in the fulfillment of personal targets by pupils with differing levels of ability.

Sixth Year is a very special time at Watson's. The curriculum, formal and informal, challenges our pupils to draw on the knowledge and experience they have gained in previous years at School, and to develop additional life skills. New approaches are introduced in preparation for study beyond Watson's. They have unrivalled opportunities to show leadership and contribute to the community within and outwith the School.

Nearly all our pupils continue to Higher or Further Education. They are fully supported by their individual tutor and our careers experts, who provide advice on subject choice and plans beyond Watson's.

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a lifelong relationship

For our leavers, eager anticipation of new challenges tempers sadness at leaving the School that for many has been a part of their lives for as long as they can remember. For the School, it is a time to celebrate the achievements of pupils and to wish them every success for the future.



TAKE PRIDE IN YOURSELF AND YOUR SCHOOL – OUR CHARTER



We hope that leaving School marks not an end but the beginning of a new and lasting relationship with Watson's. Every leaver crosses the stage at Prizegiving to receive their Leaver's Certificate and a Leaver's Badge which will identify them as part of the worldwide network of Watsonians.

Watsonians are prominent in many areas of business, the professions, the media and arts, academia, sport and public service throughout the UK and around the world. Many others continue the Watsonian tradition of service through their voluntary work at home and overseas.

The School's Development Office and a team of Watsonians who volunteer to be points of contact around the globe support our former pupil network. We keep in touch through our website and *Caritas* magazine, and hold social events including dinners and reunions. Ours is a global network of shared values and experiences.

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OUR SCHOOL CHARTER

developed by our pupils

***Treat other people
the way you wish
to be treated***

***Take pride in yourself
and your school with
consideration for the
School rules***

***Achieve your potential
by working hard and
making the most of
what is available to you***

***Be individual and make
your voice heard, but think
of the consequences
of what you say and do***

***Respect the property
of the School and
that of other people***

***Respect and
preserve the
environment***

***Support and include
others within
and outside
the School community***

For further information on our School

www.gwc.org.uk





GEORGE
WATSON'S
— COLLEGE —

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