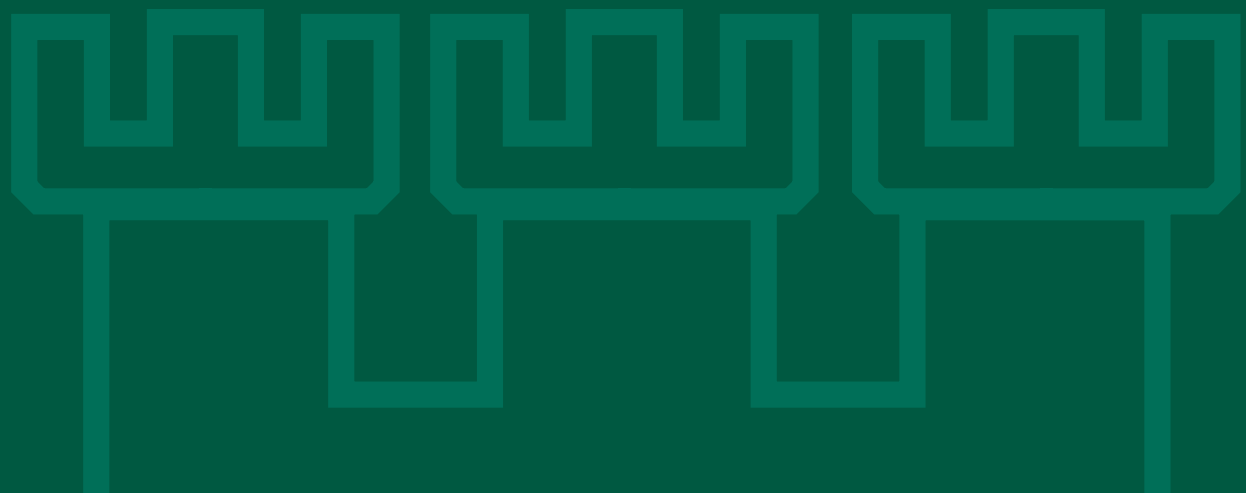


Partnerships for Progress



WELLINGTON SCHOOL
Annual Report

2010-2011





PARTNERSHIPS FOR PROGRESS

“I am delighted to introduce our 2010-2011 Annual Report, which combines the Speech Day reports of both Mr Parlour and myself with pictorial memories from the past year.

I hope it conveys, in words and pictures, that a Wellington education is so much more than pure academic achievement. We find ourselves in a global economic environment where young people, more than ever, have to create an edge through the experiences they have gained. Wellington provides that opportunity through participation in the many and varied activities on offer, which deliver challenge, reward, and lasting friendships, ensuring that our pupils are well rounded individuals when they leave school. As Mr Parlour points out in his report, partnership and teamwork are an essential ingredient in this mix.

On the academic front, Wellington has never offered a broader subject choice, whether at Standard, Higher or Advanced Higher grade. The S5 Higher exam results for the year just ended were again excellent, with the school ranking 7th nationally (and the margin between the top 7 schools was extremely small). We ranked 5th at Advanced Higher level. Congratulations to both pupils and staff.

It is encouraging that the school roll will increase in the coming academic year, but this should not come as a surprise – I am sure the quality of the education at Wellington is evident in the pages that follow.”

George Walker

Chairman of the Board of Governors



SPEECH DAY 2011 - Chairman's Remarks, George Walker

Mrs Sischy, Provost Sloan, Ladies & Gentlemen, Boys & Girls,

I once worked for a company whose roots were about 3000 miles west of here, and they had an alarming habit of changing their senior management team every 18 months. Which was fine until you became part of the senior management team!

Change for the sake of change is never a good idea, but change for the right reasons has to be a way of life. From time to time we all have to review the shape our lives are taking, where we live, where we work, where our kids are educated, and we have to make any necessary changes accordingly. We should not live in fear of change providing it is being made for the greater good.

One of the biggest events in the Wellington calendar over the past 12 months was an inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education. Believe me, this is a major event in the life of every teacher and every school. This is a detailed audit which assesses the performance of a school against a number of defined standards. It also affords everyone involved an opportunity to review current practices, and to reflect on the need for change. You have seen the Inspectors Report, and will have read the very complementary remarks about the motivation and high levels of attainment of our pupils, the breadth of choice, the commitment of our staff, and the quality of our learning support, to name but a few.

There will always be areas where we can do better, and the Inspection helped us focus on these priorities. As a result a detailed plan has been developed, outlining the changes to be implemented across the school which will take us from "very good" to a sector leading "excellent".

Many of these actions are already under way, perhaps the most fundamental being the reorganisation of the Junior School under a single Head, which is intended to improve the sharing of good practice across the whole school, and ensure greater consistency in the coordination of the curriculum.

Research has shown that one of the main reasons parents choose to send their children to private schools, is the opportunity to make the most of their potential. As we bring this academic year to a close I offer my congratulations to our pupils, who have yet again met or exceeded their potential on a wide variety of fronts. Such determination is vital in a fast changing world, and we can ask nothing more. This is so much more than pure academic achievement, but worthy of special mention is that the grade A Higher pass rate at 60% was by far the best for many years.



Achieving one's potential, however, often requires a little encouragement! Many of you have confirmed my view that our Staff are amongst the best, and I am always very happy to publicly acknowledge their dedication and skill in bringing the best out of our pupils. On behalf of the pupils, parents and Board I would like to say thank you to all our staff.

I would also like to say a personal thank you to Mark Parlour. Mark took up his first headship post at Wellington in 2006, at a time when there were some serious issues to be resolved. He has led from the front, and shown that he is not afraid to embrace change when it is required to achieve higher standards. You no longer need just take my word on this – Her Majesty's Inspectors formed the same opinion! Thank you for your whole hearted commitment. A word of thanks, too, for your wife Daphne, who is so often to be seen at a myriad of school events.

There are a number of staffing changes for the coming session. Mrs Nancy Allan has been appointed Head of the Junior School, with a former pupil, Mrs Sally Lomas, as her Deputy. Congratulations to you both. Mrs Allan's work with our Nursery has already been recognised by both HMIe and the Care Commission as sector leading, and we wish you well with this new challenge.

As a result of this change, Mrs Pat McLaren and Mr Charles Robinson will be stepping down from their current posts, with Mr Robinson continuing as teacher of French within the Junior School. Mrs McLaren joined the school in 1993 and was promoted to her current post in 1999. She has witnessed the arrival of boys, the merger with Drumley House, the move from Sleaford to Drumley and the end of boarding. Mr Robinson joined Drumley House in 1985, becoming Head in 1989, and joining Wellington upon the merger of the two schools in 1996. These represent some of the biggest changes in the history of the school, and both have made a significant contribution to Wellington. On behalf of the Board and all involved at Wellington, I would like to convey our thanks and appreciation.



Also within the Junior School Mrs Nan Duncan will be retiring after 18 years as will Mrs Yvonne Brown.

Within the senior school, Mrs Elizabeth Gardiner is stepping down as Principal Teacher of Maths after 20 successful years (although she is remaining on a part time basis), Mrs Linda Kelly is retiring after 11 years teaching Art, and Mrs Anne MacKechnie retires after 25 years as a music instructor. I would like to thank each of you for your contribution to the success of Wellington.

For the coming session we are delighted to confirm the appointments of Mrs Diana McLaren as Assistant Head of Curriculum, Mr Stuart Cathro as Principal Teacher of Maths, and Mrs Mary Murray as Learning Support Coordinator. Also joining us at the start of next term will be Miss Brenda McAngus as teacher of Maths, Mrs Catherine Ness as teacher of Science, and Miss Emma Lawson as Primary 3 class teacher. Congratulations and welcome to you all.



The Board remain satisfied that the school is in good financial health. It has carried out a review of anticipated expenditures over the next five years, and determined the surpluses required accordingly (always bearing in mind that, as a registered charity, any surplus is reinvested for the benefit of the school). Despite the various cost challenges that we face, we will not be curtailing any expenditure on teaching resources for the coming financial year, and as detailed in my letter regarding fees for next year, we will be investing almost £800,000 in our facilities. This number includes £95,000 for IT infrastructure, £150,000 for ongoing maintenance and repair work, and £550,000 for the construction of the new Study Centre and Library at Craigweil. Given the complexity of planning requirements that surround a listed building project, initial meetings with South Ayrshire Planning have been very encouraging and we expect to submit a full planning application imminently.

At a time when the Press is full of doom and gloom about education and related issues, I am pleased to report that the school roll will be higher next year than this. I believe there will be increasing interest in private education as state sector class sizes rise, and option choices reduce. Nevertheless, there remain opportunities to fill spaces in our Junior School and Sixth Year and we will continue to focus on these areas.

My fellow Governors give willingly of their time to attend board meetings and many other events throughout the year. I would like to thank them all for their selfless participation in so many ways. I would also like to welcome Mr John McGregor to the Board. He is a current parent (at least until the end of today!), a senior consultant surgeon, and Vice President of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow.

The Board continued a review of its corporate governance during the year, and you will shortly be able to see our new set of governance guidelines on the website. We have also continued to meet members of the Senior Management Team on a number of occasions to discuss matters of strategic importance. In a recent development, regular meetings are now taking place with the Wellington School Association in order to help expand the involvement of parents. As always, a word of thanks to the WSA for their fund raising support.

Today is, however, all about our pupils and celebrating their success. Thank you all for your enthusiasm, talent and energy. Take pride in both your achievements and your school. To those leaving school, we wish you every success, safe in the knowledge that Wellington will have set you on the right path to enter a changing world.

It now gives me pleasure to ask Mr Mark Parlour to present his Annual Report.



PARTNERSHIPS FOR PROGRESS - Mark Parlour

Mr Chairman, Mrs Sischy, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, pupils of the school.

The school is often described as having a family atmosphere - and, indeed, that is one of our highlights; something that makes a Wellington education so special. In the last few weeks we've enjoyed two major events that emphasise just how wide this family spreads: firstly, the Former Pupils reunion evidenced a family spanning many continents and many decades; secondly, the Wellington Association fete brought in many current parents, staff, pupils and friends of Wellington in the local community - despite the rain!

This family concept - of partnership and teamwork - is essential to all that we do. It's a message that underpins our philosophy for the pupils - but it's equally valid for our whole school community.



Through each week throughout the year we have witnessed partnerships between pupils – it could be group work or collaborative learning in the classroom, or one of the numerous sports teams playing at the weekends. Of particular and growing importance is the Outdoor dimension as pupils work together in teams in challenging environments at Barcaple or on John Muir or Duke of Edinburgh expeditions.

Perhaps the biggest strength of the school comes from the partnerships between pupils and staff - most obviously in the classroom where, from Nursery, through Primary and again at Higher and Advanced Higher, small class sizes result in very individual attention which allows our pupils to be all they can be.

Partnership between parents and the school - either formally through the WSA or Focus Groups, or informally as parents get involved with homework and other facets of school life – is absolutely crucial and an area we want to expand and consolidate. In sports, alone, the many existing parent helpers in rugby, cricket, swimming and so many other activities add real value to what we can achieve now and what we hope to achieve in the future.

Another important partnership is between the school and the local community as part of our charitable activity but also as an extension of our ethos and mentality. There is no doubt that our rugby partnership with Ayr is of immense mutual benefit. But so, too, are our Duke of Edinburgh Service, music, art, and Nursery partnerships.

Finally, as you'll hear later, there is an immense – and intense - programme of International cooperation with partners throughout Europe and the rest of the world.

There is a famous quote from Henry Ford:

“If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself.”

Hopefully in the next few minutes you'll hear just how success is taking care of itself as we work together for the future.

In SQA exams, as ever, the gold standard in Scottish education is the pass rate at Higher in S5. This year saw a pass rate of 95% which put us in the top ten of Scottish schools for the fifth year running. Our A Grade pass rate of 59.6% put us fourth in Scotland - missing out on second place by less than one percentage point. It is important to remember that this is on the back of 18 subjects offered at both Higher and Advanced Higher.

This remarkable academic performance was reflected in the fact that every one of this year's S6 pupils who applied for a university place was successful and, once again, the clear majority of these received unconditional offers.

Remember too that this academic performance is on the back of a very inclusive intake: as HMIe noted, two of our particular strengths were:

“The High levels of attainment and impressive breadth of achievement on the part of children and young people.” and

“The quality of support for learners with additional needs and the very good progress made by them.”

At a time when schools – and indeed universities - are cutting back on sciences, it is very pleasing to note that science moves from strength to strength at Wellington. After English, which most pupils take, the traditional sciences – Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Maths - remain amongst the largest option choices in S5 – indeed, only beaten by another ‘science’, Geography, for which the uptake at Wellington is amongst the highest nationally.

The popularity of Science has undoubtedly benefited from the P6 taster days and the junior Science club, as well as a vast array of activities and trips, collaborative ventures, and international initiatives.

It is not entirely surprising that this year the school has done particularly well in terms of the number of pupils who have been successful in applications to medical school - no mean feat given that competition for places has proved higher than ever. From last session’s S5, 6 girls now have confirmed places at Medical schools.

Through the session, last year’s Head Boy, Chris McKelvey received an award from the President of the Royal Society of Chemistry for having the best Advanced Higher investigation in Scotland.

In Art, around thirty pupils attended Art Club on Monday and Tuesday evenings where many used the opportunity to develop a skill for their Duke of Edinburgh Award. Collaborative projects are now the norm throughout the school and, as part of their Egyptian topic, P4 prepared a special presentation to parents using their own ideas and recording their findings on flip camera. Other pupils worked with Computing and English to produce a range of Christmas cards and, also at Christmas, they produced and sold a highly successful calendar to



support the S6 Charity.

All our senior Art and Design pupils had work selected for exhibition in the Maclaurin Galleries and work from 150 Nursery to S3 pupils is included in the Gallery’s Junior Art Exhibition. With winners at every level, we came away with half the awards on offer, and the judges were so impressed with the 3D work from Wellington that they created a new award for this category. Furthermore, in the prestigious Royal Scottish Academy Schools’ Art Award three pupils were Highly Commended and had their work exhibited in the RSA Gallery in Edinburgh.

Music features very strongly throughout all year groups, each weekday and many evenings and weekends throughout the school year. There have been numerous formal events for our singers including the Nursery



Summer concert, Carol Concert; ‘Songs from the shows’ and the Junior and Senior services at Christmas and Easter.

As ever, the school has a strong commitment towards charitable work with Choir and soloists performing at the Ayrshire Hospice, Primary 6 choir performing on Ayr Hospital Radio, and Senior pupils providing the entertainment at the Butterfly Ball for Cancer research, and the Ayr Rugby Dinner for the Ayr Community Rugby trust. Even our youngest Nursery pupils visited Glenfairn Nursing Home to sing to the elderly residents.

The school enjoyed significant success at the Ayrshire Music festival, including the top vocal trophies for female and male performers, and Ross Martin also reached the Scottish final of the Rotary International Young Musician of the Year.

In Drama, The Senior Show, ‘Peter Pan’, saw a change in format, with pupils from S1 to S3 performing to great acclaim at the Palace Theatre, Kilmarnock. At Christmas we enjoyed the Nativity Plays, ‘Busy, Busy Bethlehem’ from the Nursery and two performances of ‘Woolly Wanders Off’ from the Infants to packed audiences in Carleton Turrets Hall. This was followed by the wonderful ‘No, No, Noah!’ from P1 at Easter.

Finally, the Junior Department Show, ‘Bugsy Malone’, saw every single child participating to a remarkable standard in acting, singing and dancing and, had we had the space on the calendar and energy amongst the pupils, I am sure we could have filled the hall for at least four nights!



The English department provided a busy schedule of practice and performance at a range of events including the Burns' Supper, Public Speaking Competitions and finally the McKinstry debates. Once again, there were theatre visits and workshops, the very popular English Department Easter School, and visits to two book festivals at Auchenleck and Edinburgh.

The Creative Writing Club is expanding rapidly with about 25 regular members and this year's activities included visiting Primary 1 classes at Christmas to read their stories, collaborating with Art to write poetry inspired by famous paintings, and producing a school newspaper. Also amongst our younger pupils, a Junior Debating Club has been firmly established this year with lively and intelligent debates each week on a wide range of topics.



The concept of Responsible Citizenship is central within A Curriculum for Excellence and the Modern Studies department ran P7 and S1 mock elections in January followed by whole school mock elections coinciding with the elections to the Scottish Parliament on 5th May. This was supported by visits to London to the Houses of Parliament and Imperial War Museum, and a tour of the Scottish Parliament courtesy of Ayr's MSP John Scott. Responsible Citizenship is key at all levels, and P5 enjoyed "ARight Blether" with their classroom temporarily transformed into a Voting Station, followed by a visit to Stirling University for a day of activities connected with children's rights.



International Citizenship is one of the key strengths of Wellington school, as identified by the HMle, and permeates our whole core and extended curriculum at every level in the school.



It is not surprising that Wellington has been awarded the British Council's Full International School Award this session as we were able to meet the three key criteria of 'Year round international activity', 'an international ethos embedded throughout the school', and 'a majority of pupils within the school impacted by and involved in international work'.

Driven forward by the Modern Languages Department, the whole school enjoys a rich programme of linguistic and cultural experiences on a truly global scale. In January, Hakim Din of HMle visited the school again to talk to pupils and staff from all parts of the school about their international involvement, and the HMle will be publishing a report on the Wellington experience as an example of best practice.

This year has seen a very successful junior French exchange, a rugby exchange, the final leg of our multinational Comenius project, and additional international cooperation through our links with UCAPE. Of course, alongside this, we've seen ski trips, the Italy trip and the S6 trip to India, just to fill in the gaps. The success of these ventures can be measured through the increased linguistic competence and confidence of our young people and the links and friendships which continue to develop.



Next session will bring a further development of experiences with the addition of a senior French exchange, a German exchange, a junior rugby exchange and an international conference in October for pupils supported by UCAPE.

Within the spirit of international cooperation, the Business Studies department conducted a very successful Business Awareness Day during the French exchange visit. This was on top of a year of significant successes in the STAR Programme, the NATS Business Challenge, the CMI Workshadow Initiative, and the Proshare Investor Challenge. In addition, every single S4 student participated in the Work Experience programme this session, as it is now embedded in our curriculum.



being particularly successful at club and regional level. Cycling is growing at all points in the school: we have enjoyed cycling expeditions for parents, staff and pupils of the Junior School, and we are purchasing bike racks for all areas of the school, courtesy of the WSA. Our Cycle Training Scheme grows each year with yet another expansion in our training sessions for P7 and our Junior Road Safety Officers excelled themselves this year being short listed for the Outstanding Achievement Award and going on to make the winning presentation at Ayr Town Hall in front of 26 other schools.

Outdoor learning is a major strength of the school and every year we are building more and more into our programme to involve all age groups. This coming session our 'Outdoor Nursery' is launched, on the back of new facilities and new staff, and a great deal of parental support – and excitement! This complements our existing range of experiences from Primary 1 onwards where there are regular outdoor visits to remote locations, up to the residential experiences in P5 with 3 days on Arran and the Barcaple week in P6. Developments in the John Muir Award for P7 through this year have been equally exciting and have fired the imagination of pupils and parents alike. Overnight camping, paddling, orienteering and a whole range of other outdoor experiences are giving pupils a real taste – and a very healthy appetite – for the great outdoors. It was very rewarding to attend the presentation ceremony two weeks ago where 36 P7 pupils received their Discovery Awards.



The Duke of Edinburgh Award saw a record 85% of S3 signing up at Bronze level, with 95% signed up for next year. At Silver level, the paddling group have started their expedition programme with training on lakes and the sea, followed by a 3 day paddle up Loch Lomond. In addition, 17 pupils have completed their Silver assessment hikes, and are preparing for a Final expedition in Lochaber. This year, too, amongst a clutch of Gold recipients, Rachel Foyle, received her Gold Award badge while still in S6.



In Sport the concept of partnership is perhaps most evident, with even greater practical involvement of parents and local clubs.

In rugby, three boys have been selected to play for Scotland, with our rugby captain, Robbie Fergusson, featuring in the national press as the only schoolboy in Scotland playing in the premiership. We recorded significant victories against much bigger schools at all levels and were finalists or winners at most levels in the Ayrshire Sevens.

In Hockey, our S3 team was especially successful winning the District Cup and we have significant numbers playing representative hockey. At Senior District Level, 3 girls were selected at U18; 4 at U16; and 2 at U15 level; while at National level Eve-Anne Travers has won a handful of Scottish U16 caps.

Cricket has again been strong across the board but especially at senior level where we had our best results of any season to date. Around 100 pupils played representative cricket and, at times, there were five games simultaneously at Doonside

In Athletics, around 90 pupils attend training sessions twice each week, and the school met with significant success at the Ayrshire Schools Championships, the Scottish Relay Championships, and the Scottish Track and Field Championships. In the latter, we have a Scottish U17 Javelin Champion in James Armstrong, with a Silver medallist in Discus and Bronze in Javelin. Meanwhile, our Cross Country runners again did exceptionally well in the Ayrshire Championships.

Having said last year that the swimming results were our best ever we have now improved again with many of our Senior school team meeting with success at the Scottish Schools' championships, and our Primary school team collecting all but one cup at the Ayrshire Championships.

In Tennis, 75 Primary pupils of all ages were involved in tennis coaching at school courtesy of Prestwick Tennis Club and many pupils have been involved in competitive tournaments culminating in our winning the Ayrshire Schools Primary Tennis competition for the first time.

In Golf, Wellington was a close second in the South Ayrshire Golf Championships, with one of our team



In the spring term the Charity Run saw every single pupil from nursery to S6 take part raising £6,000, and two sixth year boys raised over £1,250 by having their heads shaved in front of the school. In the last month the Fashion Show was very well attended and the sum raised by the S6 charity now stands at a remarkable £20,600.

I'd like to conclude today by saying a very sincere 'thank you' to a host of people without whom this remarkable catalogue of achievements would not be possible.

Firstly to the teaching and support staff, for their energy and dedication throughout this busy year. Secondly, an ever growing band of helpers from our parent body, the WSA committee and many local organisations who bring an extra dimension to what is possible in and around the school.

Finally, I'd like to record my thanks to the Senior Management Team and the Board of Governors for their wisdom and support, adding stability and maintaining momentum and direction at these times of stricture and change.

Regarding the Sixth Year, each year we continue to build on the S6 experience and this year saw our first Teambuilding day held at Doonside with mental and physical challenges organised by the Army. Through the session, thirty three out of our thirty seven S6 pupils have undertaken mentoring amounting to some 63 hours per week covering all subjects and levels.

In addition Cookery lessons for 6th Year were introduced for the first time, too, courtesy of the school's chef. Many pupils were keen to avail themselves of this opportunity to improve their culinary skills before heading off to university. Getting to eat the dishes they made themselves may – or may not – have been an additional incentive!

In the coming session there will be an enhanced induction programme, and our first YASS students studying with the Open University.

One of the most significant ventures of each year is the Sixth Year Charity, and this year's charity, the Yorkhill Children's Foundation was especially relevant as a number of our pupils have attended Yorkhill over the years and through the current session. Under the leadership of Head Boy Ross Thorburn and Head Girl Victoria Armour, the pupils have organised and run cake and candy stalls, non-uniform days, Christmas parties and a Christmas Fair.

The choice of charity was even more poignant when one of our pupils being treated at Yorkhill, Ailsa Johnston from S4, very sadly passed away on 13 February after months of chemotherapy and radiotherapy. She remains an inspiration to us all and we carry her spirit in our hearts.

On the bench in the Millennium Garden, to celebrate her life, her friends in S4 have chosen the words 'In loving memory of Ailsa - an Angel from Heaven'.



I'll leave you with a quote from the philanthropist and son of Scotland, Andrew Carnegie:

"Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision... It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results."

Mr Chairman, it is with pleasure that I present this my sixth Annual Report.



We hope you have enjoyed reading this year's Annual Report and have found it to be informative. If you have any comments or would like extra copies, please contact the school.



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