Berwickshire High School



BERWICKSHIRE HIGH SCHOOL

SCHOOL HANDBOOK
2026-27

SCHOOL DETAILS

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Whilst the information provided in this handbook is considered correct at the time of publication, it is possible that there may be some minor inaccuracy by the time this document reaches the parent/guardian.

WELCOME FROM THE HEADTEACHER



On behalf of the staff and students at Berwickshire High School, a very warm welcome to you.

Berwickshire High School is a rural state comprehensive, located in the east of the Scottish Borders. We have a student roll of around 630 and a staff of around 100. We have five cluster primary schools: Chirnside, Coldstream, Duns, Greenlaw and Swinton.

As a school, we **aim for best** in all that we do. We have high expectations of our students, our curriculum, our teaching, and the support we offer. In Berwickshire, you will find students who are passionate about their learning, and being challenged; you will find kind staff and students; you will find a plethora of wider achievement opportunities, and you will find a staff wholly committed to developing their practice and doing their best for learners. It is a great place to be.

We're really proud of the school we are today and the village we've created inside these four walls.

We hope you find this handbook useful. If you have any questions, please get in touch.

Emma Dickson
Headteacher

WELCOME FROM THE STUDENT HEAD TEAM



Hello, our names are Tess Crilly, Jamie Mein, Lloyd Baron, Logan Hodge and Simonas Sakalauskas and we are honoured to be your Head Team this year. From our youngest pupils to our oldest, we want to make sure this is a year where everyone feels heard, supported and included in our aims as Head Team. We hope to be approachable, great listeners and committed to our visions where everyone is included, and making that teacher-pupil bond even better, making this year at Berwickshire High school as warm and as positive as possible.

As a Head Team, each of us represent different parts of the school catchment area and different echelons of the school, whether that be sciences, humanities, the arts, or the enhanced provision. We have come through school watching all the Head Teams before us leave their legacies and thoroughly enjoyed being part of the school community and taking part in all aspects of school life. We also know our school motto is aim for best and there's things we would like to work on too. We hope to work together in these areas so that when we leave school at the end of the year, we have hopefully made a difference for the better.

As a Head Team, our main goal is to make our school the best environment possible for both students and staff. We want everyone to feel welcomed, respected, supported and proud to be part of our school community. An important part of this is making sure students have a genuine say in school life and feel that their opinions are listened to and valued. We also want to help improve education around important topics such as sex education, neurodiversity awareness, mental

health, relationships and other issues that affect young people, creating a more understanding and inclusive school environment. As Head Team, we understand that we are role models, so we want to set a positive example through our behaviour, attitude and involvement in school life. We also hope to make our school more environmentally friendly by encouraging sustainable choices and greater awareness of our impact on the environment. Beyond the school itself, we want to strengthen our involvement within the wider community through strong connections, increased communication and supporting local causes. Ultimately, we want to work alongside students, staff and our community to make positive changes, create new opportunities and help make this a successful and memorable year for everyone.

To conclude, we are proud to be your Head Team and to represent so many different parts of Berwickshire High School. We know the year will go quickly, but we are determined to make the most of it by listening to you, working with you and turning your ideas into real change. Whether you are one of our youngest pupils or one of our older pupils, we want you to feel able to come to us and talk to us, know that your voice matters. We hope that when we leave school at the end of the year, we will have made a positive change for everyone at the Berwickshire High . Thank you for your support we look forward to making this a successful and memorable year together.

CONTENTS

	Page
Vision, Aims & Values	6
General Information	7
Staff	9
Senior Leadership Team	13
Transition from Primary to Secondary	15
Curriculum	16
Teaching Approaches	20
Assessing, Tracking & Reporting Progress	22
Integrated Student Support	23
Enhanced Provision	25
Student Leadership, Participation & Achievement	26
Student Behaviour	28
School Session 2026-27	29
Enrolment	30
Medical Arrangements	31
Administrative & Statutory Information	32

VISION, AIMS & VALUES

We are a hugely ambitious school and set high standards for everything we do

Our VISION is to become the best state secondary school in the country. By this, we mean:

- The quality of our teaching rivals that of any school
- We support, challenge and inspire every student to achieve the very best they can
- Everyone in the school enjoys their work and feels proud of the community they are part of

We AIM FOR BEST in everything we do. Specifically, we aim for our students to:

- Learn – as much as they can
- Achieve – the very best they can
- Contribute – to make our school community better and better

Guiding us in everything we do are five core **VALUES**:

- Committed – we have a mindset of continuous improvement
- Respectful – of others, the building, of ourselves
- Enthusiastic – we get out what we put in
- Supportive – there is help when we need it
- Safe – we look out for each other

GENERAL INFORMATION

Berwickshire High School is a state secondary comprehensive.

The school roll is 630. This is made-up as follows:

- S1: 132
- S2: 107
- S3: 119
- S4: 116
- S5: 95
- S6: 61

There are 90 members of staff.



Our cluster primary schools are Chirnside, Coldstream, Duns, Greenlaw and Swinton.

We have an excellent school building and outdoor spaces, which opened in 2009.

THE SCHOOL DAY

The school day starts at 8:50am. There is a warning bell at 8:45am, which signals when students should make their way to Registration.

Timings are as follows:

MONDAY TO THURSDAY

Registration	08.50 - 08.55
Period 1	08.55 – 09.40
Period 2	09.40 – 10.30
Break	10.30 – 10.45
Period 3	10.45 – 11.35
Period 4	11.35 – 12.25
Period 5A	12.25 – 13.15 (S4-6) and S1-3 Lunch
Period 5B	13.15 - 14.05 (S1-3) and S4-6 Lunch
Period 6	14.05 – 14.55
Period 7	14.55 – 15.45

FRIDAY

Registration	08.50 - 08.55
Period 1	08.55 – 09.40
Period 2	09.40 – 10.30
Break	10.30 – 10.50
Period 3	10.50 – 11.40
Period 4	11.40 – 12.30
Period 5	12.30 – 13.20

THE SCHOOL OFFICE

The school office is open during term time from 8.30am until 4.30pm Monday to Thursday and 8.30am until 3.30pm on Friday. Out of hours and during holidays messages can be left by ringing our absence line: 01361 884844.

COMMUNICATION

Berwickshire High School prides itself in having strong communication channels with parents. Here are some of the ways we communicate with you.

Daily Bulletin

Every day, we produce a **Daily Bulletin** that is filled with news and updates. This is shared with students at Registration, and also with parents. It includes:

- Updates of House challenge scores
- Details of upcoming formal assessments
- General notices for all year groups
- Specific notices for the lower (S1-3) and upper (S4-6) school

Heads Up

Every week, we produce a **Heads Up** newsletter. In addition to the information it shares about what has been going on or is coming up in the school, student achievements are shared and celebrated. Regular features of the Heads Up include:

- An update from the Headteacher
- Details of when Learning Logs will be updated in particular courses
- Details of upcoming formal assessments
- Results from recent sporting fixtures
- Details of Supported Study classes
- News and updates from faculties
- House completion updates

Tracking Reports

Tracking Reports are issued three times a year for S1 to S3 students and two times for S4 to S6 students, offering parents a high-level summary of their progress to date. Heads of Year write a comment on these once a year.

Learning Logs

More regular and specific information about your child's progress in each subject is recorded in **Learning Logs**. These are maintained using the OneNote app on iPads and are updated every 4-6 weeks. We use the Heads Up newsletter to let you know when Learning Logs are due to be updated for each subject.

Heads of Year contact

If you would like to speak to us about any matter concerning your child's progress or wellbeing, your first port of call will usually be their **Head of Year**. We have a **contact form** on our school website that allows you to do this. Alternatively, you can phone the school office and arrange to make an appointment. In addition, Heads of Year offer a weekly drop-in surgery, along with our Head of Support for Learning.

PSWs

Supporting our Head of Year team is our Pastoral Support Worker (PSW) team. PSWs will get in touch with parents regarding pastoral matters and low-level behaviour concerns.

STAFF

Curricular Principal Teachers



Ms Roslyn Currie
Literature and Languages



Mr Cameron Mabon
Music & Performances



Mrs Alicia Coyle
Mathematics



Ms Jennifer Addie
Sciences



Mrs Gillian Marchand
Design & Technologies



Mr Andrew Chalmers
Physical Education



Ms Claire Grant
Humanities

Principal Teachers of Student Support



Mrs Alison Doig
Enhanced Provision



Mrs Kathy Huffman
Support for Learning



Ms Abbie Gibson
Head of Year S2 & S4



Mrs Rebecca Robsertson
Head of Year S1 & S6



Mr William Hudson
Head of Year S3 & S5

Principal Teachers Wider School



Mr Derek Huffman
PT Pedagogy



Mr Harry Meadows
PT Pedagogical Coaching



Mrs Susan Dalton
PT STEM



Mr Rob Harvey
PT RACE



Mr Colin Gracey
PT DYW

Teaching Staff

Literature & Languages
Miss R Currie (Head of Faculty)
Mr D Huffman (PT Pedagogy)
Miss C Hood
Mr J Leiper
Mr C McNeil
Mr S Robertson
Mrs S Rowson
Mrs E Whitfield

Sciences
Mrs J Addie (Head of Faculty)
Dr S Barker
Mrs T Lawson
Miss G Morison
Mr R Stewart
Mrs L Stokes
Mr S Watson
Miss S Woodhouse
Mrs R Shields

Design & Technologies
Mrs G Marchand (Head of Faculty)
Ms E Brotherston
Miss S Darling
Mrs K Hill
Miss H Manson
Mr R Shaw
Mrs S Watt

Humanities
Miss C Grant (Head of Faculty)
Mr H Meadows (PT Pedagogical Coaching)
Mrs S Hoggan-Nisbet
Dr C Koita
Miss N Ralston
Mr M Stutt

Music & Performances
Mr C Mabon (Head of Faculty)
Miss M Waszyrowska

Mathematics
Ms A Coyle (Head of Faculty)
Miss L Atkinson
Mrs S Dalton (PT STEM)
Mrs C Kenneally

Physical Education
Mr A Chalmers (Head of Faculty)
Miss C Dunn
Mrs D Morrison
Miss L Rayner *(PRT)*

Student Support
Mrs Rebecca Robertson (HoY S1&S6)
Ms Abbie Gibson (HoY S2&S4)
Mr William Hudson (HoY S3&5)
Mr C Gracey (PT DYW)
Mr R Harvey (PT RACE)

Support for Learning
Mrs K Huffman (Head of SfL)
Mrs K Ford
Miss K McAleece
Mrs M Tharme

Enhanced Provision
Mrs A Doig (Head of Enhanced Provision)
Mrs G Morgan
Miss A Watney

BUSINESS SUPPORT STAFF

Business Manager	Mr T Marshall-Andrew
Admin Assistant	Miss S Bunyan
Business Support	Mrs K Brown
	Mrs L Cleland
Home Ec. Auxiliary	Mrs L Rhind
Librarian	Mr I Bain
Catering Supervisor	Ms N Lothian



STUDENT SUPPORT STAFF

Pastoral Support Assistants (PSAs)	**Additional Needs Assistants (ANAs)**
Mr D Aitken	Mr J Hardy
Ms L Bissett	Ms T McGregor
Mr S Brown	Mrs M Rato
Mrs S Dickson	Ms C Ross-Williams
Mrs G Laidlaw	Ms C Souter
Mrs L Ritchie	Ms G Watson
Mrs L Rosher	
Mrs A Weightman	

SCHOOL FACILITY STAFF

Facility Manager	Mr R Cleghorn
Cleaning Supervisor	Mrs H Warnock
Head Janitor	Mr R Maxwell
Janitors	Mr N Brack
	Mr V Jones

TECHNICIANS

Science	Mrs M McMillan
Design & Technology	Mr R Shaw

PASTORAL SUPPORT WORKERS (PSWS)

Miss N Grant (Attendance)
Mrs D Hills
Mrs C Wood

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM



Our Senior Leadership Team (SLT) comprises the Headteacher and two Depute Headteachers.

Headteacher: Mrs E Dickson

Depute Headteachers: Mrs L Kennedy: *Depute Headteacher of Student Support*
Mr C Murray: *Depute Headteacher of Teaching & Learning*



They are supported by Mr Toby Marshall-Andrews, the school business manager, on the following matters:

Facilities Management

Cluster Finance

HR

Absences

Timetabling

Health and Safety

REMITS

Headteacher
Mrs Emma Dickson



- School policy, procedures and continuous improvement strategy
- Self-evaluation and quality assurance
- Recruitment & selection
- Liaison with local authority
- Liaison with Parent Council

Mrs L Kennedy
DHT Student Support

QI 1.1, 2.1, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2 3.3



Line-management:

Heads of Year
PT Support for Learning
PT Enhanced Provision
PT DYW
PT RACE

Year Groups:

S1-4

Responsibilities

- Pastoral & learning support, S1-6 (including Enhanced Provision)
- Child Protection Co-ordinator
- Raising attainment *(joint)*
- Tracking & reporting *(joint)*
- Transitions (P7 & post-school)
- Health & safety

Mr C Murray
DHT Learning, Teaching & Assessment

QI 1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 2.3, 3.2, 3.3



Line-management:

Heads of Faculty
PT Pedagogy
PT Pedagogical Coaching

Year Groups:

S5+6

Responsibilities

- Learning, Teaching & Assessment
- SQA Co-ordinator
- Raising attainment *(joint)*
- Tracking & reporting *(joint)*
- Timetabling
- Absence cover
- Trips

TRANSITION FROM PRIMARY TO SECONDARY

Our school serves a largely rural catchment area taking students from the following primary schools: Chirnside, Coldstream, Duns, Greenlaw, and Swinton. We have an excellent relationship with our cluster primary schools.

The move from primary to secondary school is an important event for our students. We wish to make this move as untroubled and smooth as we can.

- Primary 7 students spend two days visiting the school in June, following their S1 timetable. These visits give the students the opportunity to become familiar with our school building and the structure of the school day.

- Students who will travel on school transport in August are given temporary bus passes to enable them to use school transport on their two-day visit in June.

An Information Evening for parents/carers of Primary 7 students is held in June. Here they will get the opportunity to meet Heads of Year, tour the school, and taste the food the school canteen offers to students.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

For children with significant additional support needs, the primary school is likely to hold a transfer review meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to consider the additional support needs of your child and how these needs would be best met. The people present at the review will be the parents, the child's teacher, a representative of the Support for Learning faculty of Berwickshire High School, and any other professionals who may have been working with your child. Your child is likely to also be invited.

OUT-WITH THE CATCHMENT AREA

A number of students also choose to attend our school from out-with our catchment area. This is done by applying to Scottish Borders Council for a **placing request**.

Parents are invited to contact the school to arrange a visit prior to submitting the placing request form.



CURRICULUM

By ‘curriculum’, we mean what we teach our students.

RATIONALE

The Berwickshire High School curriculum has been developed with the following principles in mind:

- We want our students to leave school with the *knowledge* they need to **understand the world around them**
- We want our students to leave school with the *skills* they need to **continue to learn and contribute to society**
- We want our students to leave school with ***attributes*** **which reflect our school values**
- We want our students to leave school with a ***portfolio of qualifications*** **which open the doors they need them to and which reflects their very best**
- We want our students to ***love learning for the sake of learning*****, viewing it as interesting, exciting and empowering**

Knowledge and skills

The Berwickshire High School curriculum is **knowledge-based, skills-orientated**. By teaching students a broad and deep body of knowledge, we lay the foundations for them to develop a wide range of specific skills. In doing so, we aim to realise the ‘four capacities’ which underpin the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence (successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens, effective contributors).

Overarching 'employability skills'

We are clear that students are not being taught knowledge for the sake of it. Rather, they are being taught this so that they can ‘do things’ with it. The catch-all term for ‘do things’ is ‘skill’.

In broad terms, we have identified a set of seven overarching '**employability skills**':

1. Communication and literacy (includes reading, describing, explaining and discussing)
2. IT and numeracy
3. Problem-solving
4. Creativity
5. Team working
6. Reflection & evaluation
7. Workplace awareness

These serve as a thematic steer as to the sorts of things we want students to do with the knowledge they are taught. They should also help students *articulate* the sorts of skills they are developing, for example, when it comes to applying for a job or further education.

We understand that most skills are ‘domain specific’, in that they reply on specific knowledge relating to that skill. Therefore, we talk about ‘employability skills’, rather than ‘transferable skills’.

Attributes

As well as teaching students knowledge and skills, our curriculum teaches them **attributes**. By doing so, we aim to develop their character. The attributes we aim to teach students reflect our school values:

- Committed
- Respectful
- Enthusiastic
- Supportive
- Safe

WHERE STUDENTS LEARN

For the most part, our curriculum is taught in specific subjects. However, it also extends beyond this to include learning in assemblies, clubs, sports, shows, trips, work experience and volunteering.

THE S1-3 CURRICULUM

The S1-3 curriculum is often referred to as the **Broad General Education** (BGE). The content of this has been 'unpacked' from national Experiences and Outcomes.

The BGE spans primary school and the early stages of secondary school. Students work through different *levels* in each subject, with the national expectation for most student as follows:

- **Early Level** - achieved by the end of P1
- **First Level** - achieved by the end of P4
- **Second Level** - achieved by the end of P7
- **Third Level** - achieved by the end of S3

The subjects students study in S1-3 include English, maths, science, history, modern studies, geography, art, music, drama, French, Spanish, PE, home economics, citizenship, and a range of technology-focused subjects.

Moving from S2 into S3, students are able to make subject choices which allow them to personalise their curriculum more.

Fuller details of our S1-3 curriculum can be found on our school website: Berwickshire High School - Curriculum

THE S4-6 CURRICULUM

Once they move into S4, students begin their **Senior Phase**. The courses they study are national courses, common to different schools across the country. The different types of course on offer in Berwickshire High School include:

- Nationals (National 1, National 2, National 3, National 4 and National 5)
- Highers
- National Progression Awards (NPAs)
- Skills for Work (SfW)
- Advanced Highers

In addition, senior students have the opportunity to learn in work placements and Foundation Apprenticeships.

Some of the courses we offer in the Senior Phase are delivered by partner agencies, including Community Learning and Development, Borders College and Queen Margaret University.

Use of data to inform course options

The courses we offer in the Senior Phase are under continuous review. They are informed by a range of factors, including:

- The interest that students have in studying them
- 16+ Leavers Destinations data (collected in S3)
- Local labour market data

In S3, all students complete a '16+ Leavers Destinations' form. Data from this is used to help ensure there appropriate curricular pathways to help them get to their destination of choice. For example, the most data told us most students leaving school to go into training or employment want to go into the following areas:

1. Healthcare
2. Construction and building
3. Animals, land and the environment
4. Performing arts and media
5. Engineering

Skills Development Scotland (SDS) tells us that 66% (two thirds) of Berwickshire High School students will go onto Further Education after they leave school; 33% will go into employment or training. Local employment data tells us that most employment opportunities in the Scottish Borders are in the following areas:

1. Human health and social work activities
2. Whole-sale and retail trade; repair of motor bikes & vehicles
3. Manufacturing
4. Accommodation and food service activities
5. Education

Knowledge of 16+ Leavers Destinations and the local employment market helps us to make decisions about the courses we offer in school, and the courses and workplace opportunities we work with partnership agencies to provide.

S4

We offer two types of course in S4: **long** and **short**.

- **Long** courses are taught over **6 periods** per week
- **Short** courses are taught over **3 periods** per week

Depending on the combination of long and short courses they choose, students choose to study between 5 and 8 courses in S4.

The courses students can choose to study include:

- Nationals (e.g. National 3, 4 or 5)
- National Progression Awards (NPAs)
- Skills for Work (SfW) courses

Some of the courses we offer are taught by Borders College, either at the college or in the school building.

In addition, S4 students' timetables include PE (2 periods per week) and Health & Wellbeing (1 period per week).

S5

Students typically choose to study 5 subjects, each taught over 6 periods per week.

The same range of courses is available to them as the S4, but the options also include Highers and other level 6 courses.

In addition to the subjects they have chosen, S5 students' timetables include:

- Health & Wellbeing (1 period)
- Citizenship - this includes religious & moral education (1 period)
- Enrichment, which is either:
    - PE (1 period)
    - Practical cookery (1 period)
    - Personal Finance (1 period)
    - Duke of Edinburgh (1 period)

S6

If students are returning for a sixth year, then we typically expect them to choose at least 4 courses, plus a column of volunteering (6 periods per week). This may in in-school our out-of-school volunteering. The exception to this is if an S6 student is studying 3 Advanced Higher courses.

Developing the Young Workforce (DYW)

Our Lead Specialist: Vocational Curriculum & Partnerships works in partnership with DYW Borders in providing opportunities within the school curriculum for students to work with local employers.

The school organises an annual Careers Fair and Senior Work Placements in order to help raise awareness of the range of careers and training on offer to our young people and the different routes to work in our local area and beyond. It is the aim, through DYW, to maximise and sustain those potential business links for our young people in helping them plan for their future training and employment leading to a positive destination.

TEACHING APPROACHES

TEACHING IN LESSONS



The teaching approaches we use are guided by international educational research about what works best. We work hard to ensure that all of our staff have a research-informed understanding of:

1. How students learn

2. The best ways to teach students particular things

Depending on where students are in their learning, the approaches that are likely to work best will change. For example, when they are in the early stages of learning something new, approaches that are more teacher-directed will typically be most effective. As students develop expertise in learning, they will often benefit from leading their learning more.

Accordingly, we encourage teachers to use a blend of '**specific teaching**' (teacher-led) and '**non-specific teaching**' (student-led) teaching approaches.

A 'typical' lesson

There is no set recipe for a high-quality lesson. However, typically, high-quality lessons will tend to incorporate the following elements:

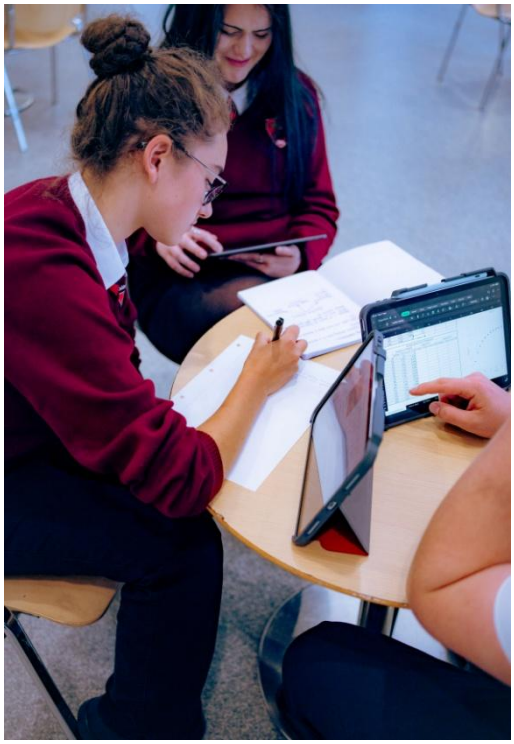
- Daily Review - a review of prior learning
- Learning intention - making clear the specific things students should be learning in this lesson
- Success criteria - making clear what success will look like
- Presentation of content
- Practice
- Plenary Review - a review of progress made in this lesson

There will also typically be:

- Appropriate support and challenge for everyone (sometimes referred to as 'differentiation')
- Activities that make everything *think hard* and their *thinking visible*
- Opportunities for feedback, which may be whole-class or individual messages

Teachers in Berwickshire High School consider these elements as they plan lessons and reflect on them after they have been taught. Our school professional development programme prioritises their continuous improvement.

HOMEWORK



'Homework' has an important part to play in student learning. It can take different forms, but really there are two types of homework that we think are most important:

1. **Practise**, to consolidate learning from lessons

2. **Preparation**, to prepares students for a future lesson (such as advance reading or research)

We have clear homework programmes for each year group. These can be found on our school website: Berwickshire High School - Homework

INDEPENDENT STUDY

As students progress through school, the need for independent study becomes more and more important. The more students do, the more successful they are likely to be. Hard work counts.

That said, research is clear that not all study habits are equally effective. Below is a summary of 'ineffective' and 'effective' study habits:

Ineffective	Effective
Reading notes again and again and again	Retrieval Practice: • Writing notes *from memory* • Making mind-maps *from memory* • Read, cover, write, check, correct • Using flash cards • Practising questions
Copying from a textbook	
Re-writing notes	

The **BBC Bitesize** website is an excellent independent learning resource for all S1-6 students. For S4-6 students, the **Bright Red** website and **Scholar** should be very useful.

Links to useful study resources can be found in the Independent Learning section of our school website: Berwickshire High School - Independent Learning

STUDY SUPPORT

Details of when Study Support is available to our students can be found on our school website: Berwickshire High School - Study Support

ASSESSING, TRACKING & REPORTING PROGRESS

ASSESSMENT

We use *continuous informal assessment* to monitor and respond to evidence of learning. This includes:

- Daily Review
- Weekly Review
- Questioning
- Discussion
- Observing performance



We blend this with *periodic formal assessment*, which has both formative and summative functions. This includes:

- Monthly Review
- End-of-topic Review
- Mid-Year Review

TRACKING & REPORTING

Learning Logs

Every 4-6 weeks, we ask students to complete a '**Learning Log**' in each of their subjects. This is designed to record performance in assessment activities, such as Monthly and End-of-topic Review. Learning Logs help students to track progress, and to report this to parents.

We have a video that explains more about Learning Logs on our school website:
Berwickshire High School - Assessment, Tracking & Reporting

Tracking Reports

Complementing Learning Logs, three times a year we send parents a short **tracking report**, summarising student progress in each of their subjects. These reports include:

- The **level** a student is working at (for example, Level 3 in the Broad General Education; National 5 in the Senior Phase)
- A **progress measure** (S1-3) or **predicated grade** (S4-6)
- An **effort and behaviour rating**

INTEGRATED STUDENT SUPPORT

PASTORAL SUPPORT



The school pastoral system ensures that every student has an identified adult who has specific responsibility for them in school and who liaises closely with home. We call this person the student's **Head of Year**.

1:1 meeting with their Head of Year.

Heads of Year are responsible for the pastoral care and academic progress of all students in a particular year group. They are supported in their work by **Pastoral Support Workers** (PSWs).

Heads of Year also work closely with external partners and agencies, including Educational Psychologists, Social Work, and Skills Development Scotland.

Once a week, Heads of Year teach students in Health & Wellbeing lessons.

SUPPORT FOR LEARNING

At different stages in their education, students may require support to help them learn. Our Support for Learning faculty works with teachers from across our school to ensure that all students get the support they need, whenever they need it.

In-class support

Sometimes, the support we provide will be in classes. This might be by ensuring a student has access to particular support resource, or by ensuring there is an adult on hand to offer support. This adult may be a teacher or a support assistant.

Out-of-class support

At other times, students require support out of lessons. This might be via one-to-one tutoring, small group teaching, or mentoring.

Contact

If a pupil feels that they need additional support for learning, the first person to speak to is their Head of House. In consultation with parents, they will make appropriate enquiries and referrals.

YOUNG CARERS

A young carer is someone who is under 18 years of age or who has reached 18 and still a pupil at school and provides or intends to provide care for another individual. A number of young carers do not always identify themselves or wish to be identified.

Young carers undertake a number of tasks for the people they live with and look after. They are often left alone to do things like washing, cooking, shopping, paying bills, collecting medication or helping to look after younger brothers or sister.

This means they might not have as much time to complete work at home which has an ongoing effect on progress and learning or attend clubs and after school activities therefore missing out on the social aspects of school.

Within Berwickshire High School we want our young carers to enjoy school and that it is a positive place to come and they feel included. Please let us know if there are difficulties meeting deadlines with work, arriving on time or any other issues which affect a young person.



ENHANCED PROVISION



The Enhanced Provision faculty supports students with severe and complex additional support needs, where significant adaptation to the school curriculum requires targeted support interventions.

The experience for students in our Enhanced Provision faculty is adapted and tailored to meet individual needs. We aim for all young people in the faculty to feel fully included in life of the school. There is a focus on developing independence, communication and life skills, whilst developing confidence and resilience when interacting with the wider world.

All students have an Individualised Education Plan (IEP) drafted in consultation with parents, education staff and if appropriate Allied Health Professionals. IEPs are reviewed regularly to ensure progression with literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing targets.



STUDENT LEADERSHIP, PARTICIPATION & ACHIEVEMENT

There are a wide range of leadership, participation and achievement opportunities available to students in Berwickshire High School. These include:

- Lunchtime and after-school clubs
- Sports teams
- House activities
- The Student Council
- Committees
- Volunteering
- Peer tutoring
- The Prefects system
- The S6 Head Team



House system

Our House System plays an important role in student leadership, participation and achievement.

- We have three Houses: **Douglas**, **Home** and **Scott**.
- The colour of tie that students have represents the house they are in (Douglas is green; Home is yellow; Scott is red). Staff are also in Houses.
- Each year group has **House Captains** for each House, voted into this role by their peers.
- Over the course of the year, there is a wide variety of events for students to win **House Points**.
- House Points can also be awarded in classes, with teachers able to award up to a maximum of 5 per week.
- House Point totals are shared with everyone on a noticeboard outside the assembly hall and in the weekly Heads Up newsletter.
- On the last day of the academic year in June, the **House Trophy** is awarded to the winning House. Every student in that House gets a prize.
- Also on the last day, we launch the start of the new House Competition Year, with a day of off-timetable activities.

Student voice

Student voice is sought in a variety of ways. This includes:

- The Student Council
- Focus groups led by Heads of Faculty
- Focus groups led by Depute Headteachers (these take place every week)
- 1:1 interviews twice a year with Heads of Year

Head Team and Prefects

In the senior school, our S6 Head Team and Prefects have key leadership roles. Each member of the S6 Head Team is responsible for leading the improvement of a specific aspect of school life for students. Once a week, the S6 Head Team meets with the Senior Leadership Team to discuss relevant matters.

Senior Prefects and Prefects also play a key leadership role in our school. Amongst other duties, they help supervise the school building and grounds at break and lunchtimes. They also monitor student behaviour on buses and in the local community.

Celebrating achievement

We strive to ensure student achievements, both in and out of school, are recognised and celebrated. We do this in a variety of ways, including:

- House Points
- CRESS Values Certificate
- Head Up newsletter
- Notice boards
- Phone call or emails home
- Assemblies
- End of year awards ceremonies

A form is available to parents on our school website to help us know about achievements out of school.



STUDENT BEHAVIOUR

We expect high standards of student behaviour at all times. This is as important in 'unstructured' time (such as break and lunchtimes) as it is in lessons.

WARM-STRICT

Our approach to working with students is '**warm-strict**': we expect staff to develop close working relationships with students and to be firm in their enforcement of our expectations.

RULES

To support students to behave well, we have clear school rules. Some of the most important to be aware of are:

- We are a **mobile-phone free school**. While mobile phones can be brought to school, they are not to be seen, heard or used at any time whilst in the school building.

- From the moment students enter the building, we expect **full school uniform**. This means that all outdoor clothing needs to be removed and put into a bag or locker.

- With the exception of S6, **students go outside at morning break**. At lunchtime, they **go outside once they are finished their lunch**. Students come back into the building when the warning bell goes. (On days where the weather is poor, this rule is reviewed.)

- There is zero-tolerance to swearing at staff.

RECOGNISING POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

Good behaviour is a basic expectation of Berwickshire High School.

However, we believe it is right to reward behaviour which goes above and beyond basic expectations. We do this in a number of ways, including use of:

- House Points
- CRESS Values Certificates
- Phone calls or emails home

CONSEQUENCES FOR POOR BEHAVIOUR

From time-to-time, the behaviour of some students may fall below basic expectations. When it does, they will be spoken to by staff about this.

For instances of more serious poor behaviour, or in cases where there are persistent issues, staff may issue consequences. These might include: moving seat, being asked to step out of the room for a short period, being asked to stay behind at the end of the lesson, a detention.

SCHOOL SESSION 2026-27

Autumn Term

Date	Details
Wednesday 19 August 2026	Students resume
Friday 09 October 2026	All break, mid-term
Monday 19 October 2026	Staff in service day
Tuesday 20 October 2026	Students resume
Monday 30 November 2026	St Andrew's Day holiday, school closed
Tuesday 01 December 2026	All resume
Tuesday 22 December 2026	All break, term ends

Winter Term

Date	Details
Wednesday 06 January 2027	All resume
Friday 05 February 2027	All break, February holiday
Monday 15 February 2027	Staff in service day
Tuesday 16 February 2027	Students resume
Friday 26 March	Good Friday holiday
Friday 2 April 2027	All break, term ends

Summer Term

Date	Details
Monday 19 April 2027	All resume
Monday 03 May 2027	May Day holiday, school closed
Tuesday 04 May 2027	Staff in service day
Wednesday 05 May 2027	Students resume
Monday 24 May 2027	Casual Holiday
Thursday 1 July 2027	Last day of term for students and staff

Details of the session for 2027/28 are available on Scottish Borders Council's website.

ENROLMENT

ENROLMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Every household in the Scottish Borders is within a school catchment area. Normally you will be given a priority place in the secondary school within your catchment area. However it is also possible to apply for a place in a school that is not in your catchment area.

Please note that your nearest school may not be your catchment school.

To apply for a place at Berwickshire High School:

- If you live in our catchment area - please complete an online enrolment form.
- If you do not live in our catchment area - please make a placement request.

You will be required to upload a copy of your child's birth certificate and evidence that you live in the catchment area.

In most cases, a place will be available and the Headteacher will give you details of start dates, uniform and a copy of the School Handbook.

In the unlikely event that the school is full you may be directed to the nearest alternative school with places.



MEDICAL ARRANGEMENTS

Limited First Aid facilities are available in school and **parents are requested not to send students to school who are feeling unwell.** Should a student become unwell at School, First Aiders will telephone the parent(s)/carer(s***). To enable this to happen it is important that the School be informed of any changes to emergency contact numbers***.**

First aid treatment for minor injuries is carried out in school for any more serious injuries it will be necessary for the students to be collected and taken to their Doctor/Health Centre/BGH.

Students who have medical/dental appointments during the school day should bring the appointment card or a letter from parent(s) to the school office to allow them to sign out.

Action plans are in place for students who suffer allergic reactions which could result in anaphylactic shock or who suffer from diabetes etc. It is the responsibility of the parents/carers to inform the school of any health development in their child which might require an Action plan be put in place. **Expiry date and replacement of medication/diabetic supplies is a parental responsibility as detailed in the action plan.** Should a student use any medication held at Berwickshire High School office, it is the parents' responsibility to replace the medication, epipen, diabetic medication/drinks, etc. immediately.

NHS Borders conduct a programme of inspections and vaccinations in school. NHS Borders Permission letters are sent home via the school with students and vaccinations take place in school administered by an NHS Immunisation Team during the school day.



ADMINISTRATIVE & STATUATORY INFORMATION

DATA PROTECTION

Scottish Borders Council is a local authority established under the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994 and its headquarters is based at Newtown St Boswells, Melrose TD6 0SA. You can contact our data protection officer by post at this address, or by email at: dataprotection@scotborders.gov.uk , or by telephone – 0300 100 1800.

Why we need your information

Every child of school age has the right to be educated. A child is of school age if he/she has attained the age of 5 but has not attained the age of 16 years. The term "young person" applies to a student over school age, but who has not attained 18 years. The education authority has a duty to provide education to any young person who is still a school student.

We need to collect, use and store personal information about you and your child/children to enable us to provide your child/children with an appropriate education. We provide these services to you as part of our statutory function as your local authority under:

- The Education (Scotland) Act 1980, Education (Scotland) Act 1980
- The Education (Placing in Schools etc. Deemed Decisions) (Scotland) Regulations 1982
- The Standard in Scotland's Schools Act 2000
- Education (Scotland) Act 2016

We also use your information to verify your identity where required, contact you by post, email or telephone to maintain our records.

Who we will share information with

We will share information with health and wellbeing services and may share information with other external agencies and organisations who provide or assist with educational provision and with online payment solution providers.

- The Scottish Government for examination, career guidance and monitoring purposes.
- ParentPay, ESP Systems and CRB to allow the school to offer cashless catering and to receive payment for school trips and events;
- Groupcall to allow the school to communicate with you;
- The NHS for health monitoring;
- Netmedia to enable the online arrangement of parents evenings;
- Internal Scottish Borders Council departments to allow the provision of catering and transport.

On each occasion, the recipients are bound to the terms of a Data Sharing Agreement and accordingly will only use your child's data for the specified purpose. This data sharing is in accordance with our Information Use and Privacy Policy and covered in our full privacy statement on our website.

We are also legally obliged to share certain data with other public and regulatory bodies such as Education Scotland, Police and NHS will do so where the law requires this.

Your information may also be shared and analysed internally in order to provide management information, inform service delivery reform and similar purposes to meet our duty to achieve best value and continuous service improvement. We are legally obliged to safeguard public funds so we are required to verify and check your details internally for fraud prevention. We may share this information with other public bodies (and also receive information from these other bodies) for fraud checking purposes.

How long do we keep your information for?

We only keep your personal information for the minimum period amount of time necessary. Sometimes this time period is set out in the law, but in most cases it is based on the business need. We will retain a copy of your child/children's educational record up until they reach the age of 25.

Photographs/Videos

Photographs and videos may be taken by staff in the school, media and other parents for a variety of reasons for example Sports Day, celebrations of achievement, charity events, excursions etc. The school your child attends may wish to display or show photographs or videos taken by themselves, in print, in various locations or by electronic means such as a website. Likewise the media or other parents may wish to use the images of Students in various ways. We ask you at the time your child enrols at one of our schools if you are happy for images of your child to be used in this way and we try to ensure you are aware of, and understand, such possible use of your child's image and that you have consented.

Any permission given will remain in force during your child's primary and secondary schooling until you indicate that you wish to withdraw your consent. You can do this by contacting the head teacher of your school as soon as possible.

Your Rights

You have the right to request access to any personal data held about you by the Council. You can also request that we restrict the use of your information or even object to any further processing. You can do this by contacting the Data Protection Officer using the contact details provided above. We will respond to your request within thirty calendar days.

For more information on your rights please visit:
http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/DPYourRights If you would like a hard copy of this information, please contact us using the contact details provided above.

Complaints

We aim to directly resolve all complaints about how we handle personal information. If your complaint is about how we have handled your personal information, you can contact our Data Protection Officer by email at dataprotection@scotborders.gov.uk or by telephone on 0300 100 1800.

However, you also have the right to lodge a complaint about data protection matters with the Information Commissioner's Office, who can be contacted by post at:

Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane,
Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF

You can visit their website for more information https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/ .

If your complaint is not about a data protection matter you can find details on how to make a complaint on: Making a complaint | Making Complaints | Scottish Borders Council

CHILD PROTECTION

- Our settings in the Scottish Borders work hard to keep our children and young people safe - all children and young people have a right to feel safe within the setting, home and community.

- Within our setting we strive to provide a safe, secure and nurturing environment for our children and young people, which promote inclusion and achievement.

- All staff in Education have a statutory and professional responsibility to take action if we have reason to believe a child is suffering, or is at risk of abuse.

- Our Scottish Borders Child Protection procedures set out what we will do if we have reason to believe a child is being abused or is at risk of abuse, either within the home or the community. These procedures are designed to ensure that children and young people get the help they need when they need it.

- All staff are aware of their child protection responsibilities and every year all staff in our setting attend a child protection update.

- Many of our staff undertake additional multi-agency child protection training.

- Every setting has a Child Protection co-ordinator who has the responsibility for overseeing child protection concerns as well as those young people who are care experienced within the setting.

- The Child Protection co-ordinator for the setting is Louise Kennedy, Depute Headteacher

What to do if you have a child protection concern?

It is everyone's responsibility to protect children.

If you have any concerns that a child is being harmed or is at risk of harm, please call without delay:

- 01896 662787 (Duty Children and Families Social Work Team)

- 01896 752111 (Out of office hours that covers all areas)

Emergency contact
If you consider a child or young person is in immediate danger, call the Police on 999, immediately.

Need more information about keeping our children and young people safe?

This link takes you to the Scottish Borders Child Protection Committee online website where you can find some suggested links to websites to better inform you about safety issues such as Internet safety and Child Sexual Exploitation as well as letting you know about opportunities for training in Child Protection. You can also find the Scottish Borders Child Protection Procedures on this website:
http://onlineborders.org.uk/community/cpc

GETTING IT RIGHT FOR EVERY CHILD (GIRFEC)

GIRFEC is the national approach in Scotland to improving outcomes and supporting the wellbeing of our children and young people by offering the right help at the right time from the right people.

The GIRFEC approach aims to make it easier for parents, children, young people and the services that support them – such as early years services, schools and the NHS – to work together to get it right.

Practitioners work together to support you and your child, working across organisational boundaries and putting your child and you at the heart of decision making, ensuring we give all our children and young people the best possible start in life.

GIRFEC means that everyone working with Scottish Borders children, young people and their families are encouraged to:

- Ensure children, young people, and their families get the help they need when they need it and are central to the process of finding solutions.
- Use one consistent and equitable approach, actively share information to agreed protocols and work more effectively together to improve outcomes for children and young people.
- Be clear about personal responsibility to do the right thing for each child/young person.
- Work with children, young people and their families, using a collaborative approach with fewer meetings. This should ensure children, young people and their families give information only once, and enables the development of one plan to meet all their needs.
- Respond to children and young people and take appropriate, proportionate and timely action with the minimum of paperwork, bureaucracy and duplication.

GIRFEC is part of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and the GIRFEC provisions are planned to be fully implemented by August 2017. If you would like any further information please ask your child's Head of House.

COUNCIL'S IMPLEMENTATION OF BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE (BSL) PLAN

The Council's BSL Plan 2018-24 has seven holistic actions. These actions are consistent with the ten long term goals of the National BSL Plan in Scotland, which are, early years and education; training and work; health, mental health and wellbeing; transport; culture and the arts; justice and democracy.

These goals represent the Scottish Government's aim "to make Scotland the best place in the world for BSL users to live, work and visit."

The Council will implement measures to promote awareness of BSL and the use of BSL, with the long term goal being that across Scotland information and services will be accessible to all BSL users.*

Contact Scotland –BSL is an online British Sign Language interpreting service that allows deaf people across Scotland to access services free and available 24 hours a day throughout the year: https://contactscotland-bsl.org/

If a BSL user requests a face to face meeting then the School is required to provide a face to face interpreter.

*Whenever we refer to 'BSL users' we mean D/deaf and /or Deafblind people (those who receive the language in a tactile form due to sight loss) whose first of preferred language is British Sign Language

EMERGENCY CLOSURE OF SCHOOL

In the event of an emergency arising whereby it is necessary to close the school, you will be contacted by 'Group Call' which is a text message to your mobile phone. It is the parents' responsibility to inform the school of any changes to your contact details. If you know that your mobile phone does not have a signal, or you do not have a mobile phone, please inform the School Office so that they can record an alternative landline number to contact you on. Students will not be allowed to leave the school unaccompanied unless school staff are satisfied that there is someone at home to receive them.

SEVERE WEATHER

In the event of severe weather we will make every effort to keep the school open and continue as normal. However, there may be situations where this is not possible and it is therefore important that you follow the points below in terms of transport arrangements. During adverse weather, school transport may be subject to cancelled services, amended routes, longer journey times or alternative bus stops used. In extreme cases there may be the need to cancel all school services.

Morning Journeys

1. School bus drivers and operators have complete discretion to cancel or vary school transport given any local weather conditions.

2. In the case of morning journeys to the school, the driver may decide that he/she either cannot undertake the journey or complete the trip to school. The driver would then return the children home. In the event of adverse weather conditions, parents should ensure that some arrangement has been made at home to cover this possibility.

3. Should the school transport for your child not operate in the morning because of adverse weather conditions but you decide to take your child to school yourself then you are expected to collect your child either at the end of the school day or at the time of early closure. Do not bring your child to school when buses do not run unless you are certain of being able to collect them at the end of the school day – even if the weather worsens.

4. School transportation may well be delayed due to adverse weather so students will have to wait longer and be exposed to the cold.

5. Parents must ensure that their children are warmly dressed just in case the journey to school is very slow or even halted in bad weather. In normal circumstances, students should not wait more than 15 minutes if the bus is late. In severely cold weather, this 15 minute rule need not apply.

6. If your child travels to school on connecting services, drivers will be told to wait for each other and not to leave any children standing in adverse weather conditions. Should the second bus not arrive children will be returned home. If the second bus does arrive but cannot complete the journey to school that driver will return children to their homes.

What will happen if students are sent home early due to bad weather or other emergency?

1. The Headteacher, with knowledge of local weather conditions, will work with the Education Department to make decisions regarding a school closure or to send children home early should severe weather conditions threaten.

2. Where students use school transportation a set of emergency instructions are used to contact transport operators and other schools using the same transport, and parents whose children have a long way to walk home from the drop-off points. Parents must ensure that some arrangement has been made to cover the possibility of students being sent home early.

3. Schools routinely communicate with parents or groups of parents using Groupcall text messaging service. Once the decision has been made then Groupcall will be used to send updated information regarding sending Students home early. Parents are asked to ensure that the school that their child attends has an up to date and accurate mobile telephone number on record for these purposes. It is further suggested that parents who may find it difficult or not possible to have their mobile telephone switched on throughout the day ensure that they check their phone on a regular basis for any Groupcall messages from the school when bad weather has been forecast or where they see deterioration in the weather.

4. If school transport is in operation and you collect your own child from school during severe weather then the school office must be informed so that transport is not delayed while staff look for a missing child.

Additional information to ensure the safe travel of students to/from school

1. The ultimate responsibility for the safety of children walking to and from bus pick-up/drop-off points rests with the parents. Parents must decide whether or not children can make their way to meet transport in low temperatures.

2. If you feel that your child should not walk home alone in bad weather from the drop-off point it will be your responsibility to meet him/her. Drivers will not normally set children down at any point significantly different from the usual one. The driver will use his/ her judgment in deciding whether to leave the child or to keep him/her on the bus. In the latter case, your child would be taken to a nearby school or place of safety. Children must follow any instructions given to them by the driver in any emergency and should not leave the bus to make their own way home.

3. Where transport is unable to operate to take children home as a result of extreme weather conditions The Emergency Planning Team will work alongside our partners to provide alternative and safe transport home. Arrangements have been made with Radio Borders to relay information about the cancellation of school transportation and group call and Scottish Borders Website will be used to inform parents of any important information.

USEFUL LINKS AND CONTACT DETAILS

- **Respectful Relationships Policy:** www.scotborders.gov.uk/antibullying

- **Educational Psychology Service:** The Educational Psychology Service (EPS) works with all SBC schools to support children's learning and wellbeing. Further information about the EPS is available on the Scottish Borders Council website. Here you can access a downloadable leaflet for parents and carers, which explains in more detail how we may be able to work with you to support your child in school: Educational Psychology Service

- **NHS Borders School Nurse:** Ruth Skinner available Wednesday lunchtime or by appointment (01361 885 015)

- **Careers Guidance Service:** Skills Development Scotland, Ross Ryrie

- **Enquire:** The Scottish advice service for Additional Support for Learning: www.enquire.org.uk Phone: 0845 123 2303.

- **Employment of Children**: Children under the statutory school leaving age can only be employed within the terms of the bye-laws on the Employment of children. These regulations allow anyone to be employed at 14 years but under certain circumstances children under 13 years of age can be employed, and for those over the age of 13 there are limits on the hours and type of employment which are allowed. Parents and employers must both complete an application form for an employment permit before the employment begins. Forms and application forms are available from the school office. Further details can be obtained from HQ Operations, Children & Young People Services, Scottish Borders Council, Newtown St Boswells, TD6 0SA.

- Further information can be found at: https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20025/licensing/670/employment_byelaws_for_children_and_young_people/1

