GEORGE WATSON'S COLLEGE

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

SESSION 2025/26





With a purpose to be the making of every child, we work tirelessly to ensure every Watson's pupil achieves their highest potential inside and beyond the classroom. That is why in this year's attainment booklet, you will see not only the headlines from our latest Qualifications Scotland results, including some of the highest grades in Scotland across many subjects, but also the breadth of activities our pupils engage in.

Every pupil is seen for their unique potential and is supported through a personalised approach that is grounded in our values to ensure they flourish here. Unlike many other schools, this is the basis for our 'open presentation' approach, which means that pupils are presented for the exams of their choice without any restrictions that may be based on grade expectations. This makes our results all the more impressive. As you read this booklet, I encourage you to look both at the whole year group figures and the attainment of our top 100 highest achievers, whose grades consistently stand alongside those from the most selective schools in the country.

Our successes are a combination of our balanced whole child approach and our commitment to helping every pupil achieve their highest academic potential, I am delighted to celebrate the results of every pupil here and hope that Watson's can be the making of your child.

Louise Clarke, Head of Senior School

Academic achievement, while a passport to the next stage of a young person's life, is not the whole picture. Our supportive environment pairs strong academic standards with a rich variety of enrichment activities designed to build confident, resilient young adults.

At the heart of these experiences and achievements is a strong, supportive partnership between pupils, families, and teachers.

We take great care to personalise each child's learning journey, with attentive tracking and thorough exam preparation, ensuring every pupil has the confidence and resources to thrive.

Fiona Taylor, Assistant Headteacher – Academic Achievement



MEET OUR PUPILS



SHANMUKHA (S4)

10As at National 5
– top 0.1% nationally

—

Top marks in the school in Application of Maths and Practical Electronics

—

Model United Nations, Chess Club, Programming Club, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Philosophy Film Club, Rifle Club, Greenpower, CanSat, Mathletes, Squash, UKMT Senior Mathematical Challenge, U18 badminton



ANASTASIA (S5)

6As at Higher
– top 0.4% nationally

—

Top mark in the school in Higher English

Top marks nationally in French and Italian (full marks)

—

Donald McLaren Prize in Italian

—

Future Asset Competition, Model United Nations

Accomplished linguist
– speaks Ukrainian, Russian, English, French and Italian

—

Now: University of Edinburgh

– Business and Economics



CHRISTIAN (S4)

9A Band 1s at National 5
– top 0.1% nationally

—

Top marks in the school in History

Top marks nationally in Biology, Physics and Maths (full marks)

—

Ferguson Bruce Music Scholar

National Champion in the Enterprising Maths in Scotland final, and Silver medal in the Cayley Mathematical Olympiad

—

Chamber Choir, Trad Band, Caritas Strings, Symphony Orchestra

ARSM and LTCL Piano Performance Diploma, Grade 8 Violin, Prize Winning Composer

23 pupils
achieved the top marks in the country in
19 subjects
across N5/H/AH

96%
pass rate
at S5 Higher

38%
of S5 pupils earned 5 or 6 A Grades at Higher, compared to 5% nationally

26
pupils
achieved 5 or more A Band 1s
– top 0.5% of results nationally at Higher



NATIONAL 5

Top 100

A Grade 100%

Full Cohort

A–C Grade 97%

+18pp* on national results

A Grade 76%

+36pp on national results

** Percentage points*

31 subjects

to choose from

Top candidates nationally

in Biology, English, French, German, Mandarin (simplified), Maths, Philosophy, Physics and Spanish

55% of pupils

achieved 7 or more A grades (compared with 8% nationally)

92%

of S4 pupils achieved their SCQF Level 5 Mental Health and Wellbeing Award



HELEN (S4)

8A Band 1s at National 5 – top 0.3% nationally

—

Top marks in the school in Computing Science and Graphic Communication

Top marks nationally in French and Maths (full marks in both)

—

Badminton, Craft Club, Piano, Mathletes, Merchant Company funded Oil Painting Portrait Workshop

S4 Prizes in Art, Chemistry, Computing Science, Graphic Communication

2nd Prize in The Merchant Company Portrait Prize

HIGHER

Top 100

A–B Grade 100%

A Grade 99%

Full Cohort

A–C Grade 96%

+19pp on national results

A Grade 65%

+30pp on national results



CALUM (S5)

6 A Band 1s at Higher – top 0.1% nationally

—

Top marks in the school in Computing Science, Engineering Science and Maths

S5 Prize for Scholastic Excellence

—

PPE, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, S5 Young Enterprise – Overall Lothian winners (inc Best Finance, and Presentation), 1st VI tennis and 1st XI football

98 pupils

achieved straight As in 5 or more Highers

Top candidates nationally

in Economics, Environmental Science, French, Italian and Politics

6+ years 100% pass rate

in Art and Design, Italian, Latin, Mandarin (simplified), Music and RMPS

33 subjects

to choose from





ADVANCED HIGHER

Top 100

A–C Grade 100%

A Grade 70%

Full Cohort

A–C Grade 92%

+14pp on national results

A Grade 57%

+21pp on national results



CHARLIE (S6)

All As across 3 AH,
5 Highers and 8 N5s

Highest mark nationally for all three AH subjects (Biology, Chemistry and Mathematics). Full marks at in Mathematics at N5, Higher and AH

—

The Wright Prize for Scholastic Excellence,

The Stanley Bennet Prize for Service to the School

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award

1st XI Hockey Team, Watsonian Club Hockey

—

Now: Newcastle University: Medicine and Surgery

7+ years 100% pass rate

in Art & Design, Classical Studies, French, Mandarin (simplified), and Music

77 pupils

achieved 3 or more Advanced Highers

Top candidates nationally

in Art & Design (Design), Art & Design (Expressive), Biology, Chemistry and Maths

26 subjects

to choose from

A POSITIVE DESTINATION FOR EVERY PUPIL

We take great pride in supporting our pupils as they embark on the next chapter of their academic and professional journeys. Our pupils leave us equipped with the skills, knowledge and confidence to thrive beyond the gates of Colinton Road, ready to make a meaningful impact in their chosen fields and contribute to the world in their own remarkable way.

For many pupils their next step is university

99%
of UCAS applicants received a university offer

496
unconditional offers were made

34
university destinations across the UK

University destinations in 2026 included:

University of Oxford
University College London
Durham University
The University of Glasgow
The University of Aberdeen
The University of Edinburgh
University of St Andrews
University of Strathclyde
University of Dundee
Newcastle University
University of Stirling
Glasgow Caledonian University
Heriot-Watt University
University of York
University of Bath

Studying a kaleidoscope of subjects

Law
Medicine & Dentistry
Engineering & Technology
Creative Arts & Design
Business & Administrative Studies
Languages
Social Sciences
Business & Administration
Mathematical Sciences
Physical Science
Computer Science
Psychology
Biological Sciences
Education
Geography & Environmental Studies

For others, talent and ambition open doors to conservatoires, scholarships, and specialist destinations worldwide

Alternative destinations (non UCAS)

JP Morgan Chase
Graduate Apprenticeship
Finance

University of Toronto
Graduate Apprenticeship
Finance

University of Viterbo (Wisconsin, USA)
Soccer Sports Scholarship

Fife College
HnC Social Sciences

Edinburgh College
HnD Sports and Exercise Coaching

Heriot Watt
Graduate Apprenticeship
Business Management

Conservatoire applications for 2025/26

Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
Traditional Music
Filmmaking

7 pupils taking a gap year

WHY OUR PUPILS FLOURISH

Our Approach

Strong Foundations

Baseline assessments build strong foundations and identify areas where additional targeted support is needed. Academic data is shared between Junior and Senior School to ensure a smooth transition and progression.

Progression Coordinators support pupils at key transitions: P7–S2 and S3–S6.

Regular Personalised Support

Individual learning plans identify areas of additional support.

- Form tutors meet with pupils daily for registration and first-level guidance, remaining with them from S1–S5.
- Heads of Year and Assistant Heads of Year support pupil wellbeing, and achievement.
- Pupils and parents work with teachers and our careers team on subject choice to ensure the best pathway.
- Targeted support is offered based on assessments, tracking points, and exams for students needing extra support.

Exam Preparation and Post School Planning

Academic departments run targeted grade booster clinics and drop-in sessions in preparation for prelim and final exams.

Ongoing one-to-one careers support and interviews are organised by our Futures Team.

Ongoing one-to-one careers support and interviews are organised by our Futures Team.

S6 pupils receive additional support from a form tutor and S6 tutor for UCAS/ college applications, meeting regularly for guidance and interviews.

S6 early applicants receive specific support for Oxbridge and medical courses, including mock interviews.

www.gwc.org.uk/joinus admissions@gwc.org.uk 0131 446 6005



GEORGE
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