In Galashiels Academy we believe in ambition and aspiration and working in partnership to produce excellent young people. Our students leave our school with the attributes, skills and qualifications to become outstanding individuals and enhance the communities they will live in and serve. Our vision is to develop in our young people the values, skills and qualifications to be the best they can be.

My aim is for all our young people to have pride and ambition in themselves and in our school. We have high expectations of each other in our school which we aim to be a place where all pupils and staff feel valued and can learn and achieve. These aims are reflected in our values of effort, respect and ambition. Our school provides excellent levels of support, high levels of learning and teaching, a wide variety of extra-curricular opportunities and experiences and a varied and accessible curriculum.

From our students we expect very high levels of attendance and punctuality and a pride in wearing our school uniform which represents identity and equality. In classes we encourage all our students to be ambitious and to always give their best in everything they do. We also want our students to believe that making mistakes is part of learning and essential to making progress.

I believe strongly in partnership and working together in trust and openness. To parents we ask that you continue to support your children at home and keep in touch with the school. To the local community we would also welcome any support as we develop our young people and deliver a wide and varied curriculum.

We value your feedback. If you have a suggestion or if you need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will do everything we can to help. You can also keep up to date by looking at our website and following our Facebook and Twitter pages.

Thank you

Kevin Ryalls
Headteacher
We are a comprehensive school providing an education to 815 S1 to S6 young people. We are non-denominational and we do not teach Gaelic.

**Contact Details**

**Address:** Galashiels Academy, Elm Row, Galashiels, TD1 3HU  
**Tel:** 01896 754 788  
**Fax:** 01896 755 652  
**Email:** galashielsacademy@scotborders.gov.uk  
Kevin Ryalls, Headteacher  
kyralls@scotborders.gov.uk  
Alison Ferahi, Parent Council Chair  
aferahi@btinternet.com

**Website:** www.galashiels.org.uk  
**Facebook:** @GalaAcad  
**Twitter:** @Gala_Academy

We are a comprehensive school providing an education to 815 S1 to S6 young people. We are non-denominational and we do not teach Gaelic.

**Enquires**

- For any general concerns or enquiries please contact the school by phone or email. For more specific concerns please contact the relevant Pastoral Teacher.
- Any concerns are dealt with quickly by the Pastoral teacher dealing with the issue or by liaising with the relevant member of the Senior Leadership Team, Principal Teacher or teacher.

**Absences**

For absences please inform the school or the relevant Pastoral teacher by phone or email on the first day of the absence. If your son or daughter is absent from school for more than one day parents are expected to contact the school each day that they are absent or tell the school the exact dates he or she is absent at the beginning of the absence.

**Communications with Parents and the Community**

- Parent Council Meetings
- School Website – we have a Parent Voice section including all minutes from Parent Council meetings [www.galashiels.org.uk](http://www.galashiels.org.uk)
- Parents’ Evenings – S1 to S3 one per year, S4 to S6 two per year. See calendar on website.
- Parents’ Information Evenings eg S2 to S5 Evening Course Choice and Subject Fair, P7 Parents’ Information Evening, Preparing for Higher Education Evening S5-S6, Careers Fair S1-S6
- Parent Consultations on specific issues and at every Parents Night through a questionnaire
- Press Group page in Border Telegraph
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Termly Newsletters

**Placing requests or visits to the school**

- For placing requests please phone the school and ask for Ross McLaren, Depute Headteacher or email Ross.McLaren@scotborders.gov.uk
- To arrange a visit please phone the school and ask for Kevin Ryalls, Headteacher or email kryalls@scotborders.gov.uk
SCHOOL ETHOS

Through support, challenge and providing opportunities, we enable our young people to be the very best they can be and to become outstanding young people who are self-aware and have strong skills for life, work and learning. We nurture our young people as individuals with their own skills and qualities to enhance the communities they live in and to have the drive and self-confidence to contribute to developing our communities and our country.

We have high levels of ambition and aspiration which lead to high levels of attainment and inclusion which are at the core of the Scottish Government aims for schools. We have a Growth Mindset oriented learning culture where staff and young people embrace challenge and value effort, learning from mistakes and thriving on feedback. Our young people learn, excel and develop in classrooms, in clubs and societies and in the community.

We celebrate and recognise achievements every day through a culture of vibrant, exciting and engaging learning and teaching. The best schools have the best teachers and the bulk of staff development time is used to ensure that our staff are always developing and supporting each other to develop professional practice. We have links with Scottish Government Improvement Advisors and Winning Scotland in this area.

We have a strong Developing the Young Workforce agenda in the school which extends beyond Work Experience to a Business Partnership and an annual Careers Fair. Our departments are teaching subjects and also the ‘Gala Skills’ which will be a strong focus going forward: self-awareness and growth mindset; literacy; numeracy; higher order thinking skills; understanding academic standards for the senior phase; study skills; Digital Literacy; organisational skills and working with others. We offer an increasing range of qualifications in this area such as Leadership, Employability, Pathways and Rural Skills.

We have a positive and welcoming school based on positive relationships. We ensure high standards of behaviour through solution oriented, restorative and nurturing approaches. We care for our young people and develop health and wellbeing in the curriculum and also through a variety of support strategies: Pastoral, Personal and Social Education, Learning Support, Personal Support classes, Pupil Support, targeted mentoring and in all classes.

Central to our work on inclusion and identity is the House System. Our four Houses: Abbotsford; Eildon; Tweed and Yair hold assemblies which are led by young people through Personal Support Periods. There are also regular competitions and a House Points system.

We have an extensive and wide variety of extra-curricular opportunities through clubs and societies and school trips which are both very important to the entitlement for our young people. The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme is a core part of this part of the wider curriculum. Learning is not confined to the classroom and there is huge value in trips and clubs. We have very high levels of participation in our clubs, particularly in sport where the school enjoys a strong reputation for achievements in hockey and rugby and many other sports. New clubs in engineering and the arts are fantastic events and help develop important skills such as public speaking and sound and lighting skills.

There are different ways for our young people to develop leadership skills. This is achieved as part of the learning and teaching process through presentations and peer and group work. There is a Leadership qualification in S4–6. It is developed in the range of trips and clubs outlined above. We also have a Pupil Council and our young people lead assemblies in school. Our links with the Rotary include the leadership challenge and we have a strong team of Prefects. The Head Team are selected following a vote and interviews and have a very important role within the school and in the community.
The School Vision

**Galashiels Academy:**
Values, skills and qualifications to be the best we can be.

**School Values**

- **Effort**
- **Respect**
- **Ambition**
Values, skills and qualifications to be the best we can be.

Galashiels Academy

The Academy Way

Ready
Respectful
Responsible

continues over >>
Home-School Communication

- Full partnership between parents/carers and school is essential if pupils are to develop their full potential. If a parent/carer feels concern at any time regarding the progress or general well-being of a pupil, the appropriate pastoral teacher should be contacted. If, during the session, it is felt that any pupil is underachieving because of poor attitude, or lack of application, or if a pupil’s behaviour falls below the standard expected, the parent/carer will be contacted and may be asked to come to school to discuss the problem.
- Parents/carers are invited to attend the regular review meetings between the pupil, pastoral teacher and/or teacher of support for learning (if a child has been identified with additional support needs) and are strongly encouraged to do so. These teachers are also available for consultation with parents/carers as needed. At those times, general reports on the pupil’s progress, or specific problems, can be discussed.

TRANSITIONS
Arrangements to Support Pupils in making Transition

The move from primary to secondary school is an important event for our pupils. We make this move as positive and smooth as possible. We have an excellent relationship with our associated primaries and we work together to maintain this strong partnership.

We have a planned calendar of events in place to ensure that information is collected and shared to ensure the learning needs of all students are understood and that arrangements are in place to allow these to be met. Pupils with Additional Support Needs are supported by an enhanced transition programme involving meeting with parents and children, visits to the school, buddies and partner support. The P7 pupils are welcomed to Galashiels Academy on various days:

» Numeracy Day
» Expressive Arts Day
» Literacy Day
» Health and Wellbeing Day
» Remembrance Service
» 2 Induction Days when they follow their S1 timetable (and meet S6 Buddies)

The Senior Leadership Team visit the Primary Schools to meet pupils and parents. The PT Pastoral for Transitions and PT Support for Learning and Inclusion make regular visits to Primary Schools. Several pupils have the opportunity to visit the Academy on more occasions when this is required to make the transition as smooth as possible.

Another Parents’ Evening is held after the 2 day visit providing more information to parents and allowing parents to visit our school and meet with key staff and hear about current pupil experience.

By the time pupils start in S1, there are many staff who know the pupils well and this knowledge along with discussion with Primary colleagues is key to placing pupils in classes where their learning and social needs will be best met.

Post 16 Transition

We are dedicated to ensuring all students make a positive destination when they come to leave school whether their pathway is College, Modern Apprenticeship, University or Training programme. For the majority of students, support from the Pastoral team, through the PSE programme and 1-1 interviews with Skills Development Scotland are sufficient to ensure that students have appropriate plans in place when they leave. UCAS personal statements for example are thoroughly prepared and supported for our University applicants. However it is acknowledged that some students, for a variety of reasons, may struggle to make a transition from school. At Galashiels Academy we have a planned transition programme for identified students starting in S3, involving multi agency work. This early discussion with appropriate agencies helps to ensure that students and families, potentially vulnerable in transition, are well prepared to move on from school.

Our PSE classes prepare students for the future in partnership with colleges, universities and employers. Great care is taken to ensure that individual pathways are supported.
Parents wishing to arrange an appointment with any member of staff should contact the school office. We would strongly encourage you to contact us prior to arriving at school as all teachers within the school have teaching commitments and may not be able to meet with you without prior arrangement.

Reports
• Reports on pupils’ progress are issued at various points in the year. Details are published annually as part of our school calendar.
• Reports contain information about progress in each subject. There are also annual (Bi annual in senior school) meetings arranged between the parent and the class leader at which achievement, and causes for concern are discussed. ‘Cause for Concern’ letters may be issued at any time if teachers feel that parents need to be informed of a specific issue.

Homework
The following is a summary of the roles and responsibilities of pupils, staff and parents in the policy:

Parents are asked to:
• Support the school by emphasising the importance of homework.
• Ensure, as far as possible, that their child completes homework, and where appropriate, assist in its organisation.

• Provide, if possible, somewhere quiet to study.
• Encourage their child to extend learning by studying outside school.

Pupils are expected to:
• Complete and hand in homework on time.
• Plan homework and study time so that all deadlines are met.
• Supplement work in school with study out of school, for example, reading over notes or work from class and reading ahead.

Teachers will:
• Ensure that clear instructions are given for each homework task and that pupils understand the nature and purpose of the work issued.
• Ensure that work set is appropriate to the pupils’ abilities.
• Ensure that adequate time is given for completion of homework and the pupil’s work is checked and returned within a reasonable time.
• Monitor the completion of homework and report.

Issue of school reports and general information
In cases where a pupil’s parents have separated and both wish to be kept informed of the pupil’s progress and other school information, a request to this effect should be made in writing to the Headteacher or appropriate Depute Headteacher.

SCHOOL NEWS

www.facebook.com/GalaAcad
Includes the Daily Information Sheet and many other day to day updates from the school, pupil achievements and much more.

@Gala_Academy
Similar updates to Facebook.

Galashiels Academy News
(Daily Information Sheet or D.I.S)
There is a daily bulletin, the D.I.S which gives information about clubs, events etc. This is discussed in Class in the mornings during period 1 and is also available on the front page of the website. Links to this can also be found on the school Facebook and twitter account.

Letters
Frequent letters are sent to parents giving specific information on matters such as examination arrangements.

Report:
The school publishes a newsletter once a term. This is written by pupils, and contributions from anyone in the school community are welcome. The newsletter includes notes of pupils’ achievements, life at the Academy and forthcoming events. The newsletter is free and copies are distributed to all pupils, staff and parents/carers. It is also on the website.

Newspaper Columns
Our school press group regularly write pieces featured in local newspapers such as the Borders Telegraph.

Website
The school now has a very informative web-site, which is regularly updated. Please visit us at www.galashiels.org.uk
THE CURRICULUM

Curriculum choices and change
S1-3 Curriculum (BGE)
In S1 to S2, the school curriculum consists of a number of curricular areas. Within each curricular area, there may be one or more subjects. Each of curriculum areas has a principal teacher responsible for the subjects within it. Each curriculum area consists of a number of ‘experiences and outcomes’ which make up your child’s course of study.

S4-6 Curriculum (Senior phase)
All young people will get a Broad General Education to the end of S3 and the chance to specialise and take qualifications from S4 in what is known as the “Senior Phase”. Pupils will have the opportunity to pick specialised subjects that suit and match their interests at a variety of levels of study. Specifically:

- SCQF Level 1 incl National 1
- SCQF Level 2 incl National 2
- SCQF Level 3 incl National 3
- SCQF Level 4 incl National 4
- SCQF Level 5 incl National 5
- SCQF Level 6 incl Higher
- SCQF Level 7 incl Advanced Higher

Literature will be issued to support this process and parents/carers will have the opportunity to attend a variety of events organised in school to offer support and advice to both pupils and parents/carers making these crucial decisions.

Course choice sheets and booklets on the school website www.galashiels.org.uk

THE PARENT COUNCIL

Parents, carers and family members are by far the most important influences on children’s lives. Research shows that when parents are involved in their child’s learning, children do better at school and throughout life.

Because parents have such a vital role to play in their children’s education, the Scottish Parliament has passed a new law called the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006) – to encourage and support more parents to become involved.

The main aims of the Parental Involvement Act (the new law) are to:

- Help parents become more involved with their child’s education and learning.
- Welcome parents as active participants in the life of the school.
- Provide easier ways for parents to express their views and wishes.

To help achieve these aims, all parents will automatically be members of the Parent Council at their child’s school and will be entitled to have a say in what happens at the school.

As a member you can expect to:

- Get information about what your child is learning.
- Get information about events and activities at the school.
- Get advice/help on how you can support your child’s learning.
- Be told about opportunities to be involved in the school.
- Have a say in selecting a Parent Council to work on behalf of all parents at your school.

The role of a Parent Council is to:

- Support the school in its work with pupils.
- Represent the views of all parents.
- Encourage links between the school, parents, pupils, pre-school groups and the wider community.
- Report back to the Parent Forum.
Subjects Available


- **Our S2 BGE Curriculum** introduces choice with 2 periods of option which include IDL opportunities and school of rugby. In addition to same subjects offered in S1, Spanish is introduced.

- **Our S3 BGE Curriculum** is grouped under skills for life learning and work. Core subjects are Mathematics, English, RME and PE. Pupils can then specialise in each of the curricular areas: Modern Languages, Science, Technologies, Social Subjects, Expressive Arts and Health and Wellbeing. This means that, to prepare for Senior Phase S4 to S6, young people choose discreet subjects such as Physics, Chemistry, Biology, History, Geography and Modern Studies. In these choices there are courses that meet the needs of all our pupils to suit the uniqueness of our school. We also offer 2 columns of 2 periods which are skills for life and work subjects. There are a wide variety of options available in this column, several of which are accredited and provide a good platform for progression to the Senior Phase.

- **Our Senior Phase curriculum** is designed for S4 – S6 as a whole. In S4 pupils study 6 National courses, 2 of which must be Mathematics and English. There is choice within Mathematics of Personal Finance, Lifeskills Mathematics or Mathematics and Numeracy. In English, Communications is also offered. Core subjects for S4 Pupils are PE, RME and PSE. Flexible timetabling allows S4 pupils to study Highers in S4 if desired. S5/6 pupils can choose from a wide variety of SQA courses from National 1 all the way up to Advanced Higher. Departments are increasingly offering more and more courses so that we have a curriculum that meets the needs of all our learners.
Our vision is ‘Values, Skills and Qualifications to be the best we can be’. The Gala Skills are key skills for life, learning and work so our young people can be the best they can be at school and after school.

We have 9 Gala Skills:

1. TEAMWORK
2. RESILIENCE
3. COMMUNICATION
4. ENTHUSIASM
5. RESPONSIBILITY
6. DIGITAL LITERACY
7. CREATIVITY
8. NUMERACY
9. PRACTICE

We know that skills such as our Gala Skills are hugely important when working and learning after leaving school. We also know that if school and home and partners can give the same messages, our young people will be more successful.

The Academy and our cluster primary schools all have Gala Skills Ambassadors and all our young people in all our schools will develop a CV in the Gala Skills drawing on experiences in and out of school, including clubs and wider achievements as well as lessons on the skills across the school. This will enable our young people to articulate their strengths and next steps and be ready for interviews and applications for education, employment and training.

What can parents and carers do to help?
• Discuss these skills at home
• Encourage the young people to reflect on achievement and next steps in these skills
• Share examples of when these skills have been important in your experience
DEVELOPING THE YOUNG WORKFORCE

Background

- The Wood Commission Report in 2014 identified approx. 55,000 young people in Scotland not in education, employment or training (NEET)
- The Wood Commission produced 39 Recommendations for Local Authorities, Schools, Colleges and Employers to implement over 7 years. The aim is to reduce the number of NEET young people by 40% by 2021
- Employers of all sizes are very concerned by the Skills Gap. Young people do not have the necessary skills to replace an ageing workforce. In particular, employers emphasise the need for skills such as Team-Working and Problem Solving as well as Communication, Numeracy and IT skills

Galashiels Academy School Aims:

- Increase the role of Vocational Education and Foundation/Modern Apprenticeships
- Prepare pupils more effectively for the World of Work
- Create partnerships between Employers and Education

To do this, we are moving forward on a strong Agenda, for example:

- Annual Careers Fair, with an emphasis on Apprenticeships and Training
- New vocational courses such as Rural Skills
- Employability Awards being delivered across the school
- The ESH Constructions Employability Programme delivered to all S6 students
- A rolling programme of Mock Interviews
- A Core Business Partnership Group, which meets with the Headteacher once a month
- Other extended and sustained Business Links
- Multi-agency support to ensure Positive and Sustained Destinations
- A Staff DYW Working Group which will take forward Skills for Work in all classes
- Implement the new Work Placement and Careers Standards

Links with local organisations, denominational bodies

Energise Galashiels • Local Councillors Galashiels Community Council • Galashiels Rotary Club • Employers through our Business Partnership and curricular links: ESH Construction, Qube Telecommunications, Clelands Volvo, Abbotsford House, Hogg and Thorburn Solicitors, Martin Currie Investment Management, Edinburgh • TDI Youth Club Gala Rugby Club • Gala Fairydean Football Club Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme A range of local charities and bodies Links with churches are developing

SUPPORT FOR PUPILS

Support for learning

The Support for Learning Department at Galashiels Academy aims to support students with a wide range of needs in a mainstream setting. The SFL department works together with SLT and pastoral staff, subject teachers, parents and other relevant bodies to ensure that all pupils are able to access a broad, balanced, relevant curriculum.

A young person may require input from Support for Learning to address any barriers to their learning which may include:

- Specific learning difficulties such as literacy difficulties, dyslexia and dyscalculia;
- Social or emotional difficulties;
- Behaviour difficulties;
- Physical, sensory or communication issues;
- Being a young carer;
- Speaking English as an Additional Language.

- Support staff including Support for Learning Teachers and Additional Needs Assistants work in classrooms alongside subject teachers so that the learning needs of all individuals can be met.

LINKS

Education Scotland: www.education.gov.scot
Skills Development Scotland: www.myworldofwork.co.uk
Facebook: 

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Support staff may be responsible for supporting individual students, small groups, or the whole class.

Support for Learning Teachers also give specialised teaching and support to small groups of pupils. The range of support provided by the Support for Learning Department includes:

- Raising awareness and promote an understanding of the role of Support for Learning in meeting the needs of all pupils;
- Assisting faculties in the evaluation and suitability of courses;
- Advising staff on issues relating to the needs of pupils;
- Collating and making information available to staff to support pupils’ needs and offering CPD to staff;
- Supporting teaching and learning within Faculties by means of cooperative teaching.
- Offering focused support to individual pupils/small groups as necessary;
- Offering study support to targeted pupils as necessary;
- Offering individual programmes to targeted pupils including Skills for School, Enhanced Curriculum Group, Paired Reading and Dyslexia group.

All children and young people need support in order to learn, but some require support which is additional to, or different from, what is normally provided. This is known as having additional support needs, or ASN.

For most of these children, their needs will be planned for through normal school planning processes. However, some children may need help above and beyond what the school can normally provide. We call this additional support for learning, or ASfL. A child/young person’s needs may last for a short time, and the problem may be resolved easily or, their needs might be very complex, and they may require additional support for a number of years.

- If you feel that your child needs additional support for learning, the first person to speak to is your child’s pastoral teacher. You have the right to request an assessment of your child. Within our school we operate a model of staged intervention where support is provided in varied ways to meet individual needs. Our approach to assessment ensures that the needs of children and young people are recognised and appropriate support can be provided.

Please see the link below for further information about additional support for learning (ASfL)
https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20041/support_for_pupils/456/additional_support

The statutory framework for Additional Support for Learning is the Education [Additional Support For Learning] [Scotland] Acts 2004 and 2009. For more information, you can contact:

A. Enquire, the Scottish advice service for Additional Support for Learning. They have a wealth of information, including practical guides and fact sheets for both parents/carers and young people. You can find the website at www.enquire.org.uk, or ring them on 0345 123 2303.

B. Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance, a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SC033576; www.siaa.org.uk

C. Scottish Child Law Centre, a charitable body registered in Scotland under registration number SC01274; www.sclc.org.uk

Secondary Support Centre

- All students within the department have individual educational programmes focussing on the key areas of Literacy and Communication, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing.

- In line with Curriculum for Excellence entitlements students experience a broad general education in years S1-3 and a senior phase with an emphasis on skills for learning, life and work in S4-6. At each stage students celebrate personal achievements and are given opportunities to make choices and develop interests.

- The Secondary Support Centre provides a specialist teaching and total communication environment with the use of objects of reference, symbols, visual timetables and alternative augmentative communication methods.

- The department has close links with multi-agency colleagues including speech and language therapy, physiotherapy, music therapy, occupational therapy and riding for the disabled.

- All students attend classes throughout the school appropriate to their needs. The Secondary Support Centre provides classes and courses for all year groups with an emphasis on functional life skills.

- As such, students undertake learning in the local community as well as the classroom. Subject classes are also delivered for groups of students from the Secondary Support Centre in the areas of Art, Music, Science, PE, HE, CDT and French.

- Student transitions at entry to and exit from secondary education are carefully planned well in advance of the transition with students themselves, multi-agency colleagues and families.

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## SUPPORT WEBSITES

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<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>WEBSITE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Parentline Scotland</td>
<td>A free, confidential telephone helpline for parents and anyone caring for a child in Scotland. You can call about any problem, however big or small. Open Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9am-5pm and Tuesday and Thursday 9am-9pm.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.children1st.org.uk/parentline">www.children1st.org.uk/parentline</a></td>
<td>0800 800 2222</td>
<td><a href="http://www.UKparents.co.uk">www.UKparents.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Enquiry Scotland</td>
<td>Offers support to parents and their gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender children across Scotland. Parents who have experience of learning to understand and support their own gay children operate the helpline.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.parentsenquiryscotland.org">www.parentsenquiryscotland.org</a></td>
<td>0131 556 6047 / 0141 427 3897</td>
<td><a href="http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone">www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Network Scotland</td>
<td>Run by parents, offers information and resources to provide parents with new skills and support so that they can get on better with their children.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.parentnetworkscotland.org">www.parentnetworkscotland.org</a></td>
<td>0141 948 0022</td>
<td><a href="http://www.mind.org.uk">www.mind.org.uk</a></td>
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| UK Parents                  | Provides information on a range of issues affecting parents, both mums and dads, from a range of different viewpoints and interests. | www.UKparents.co.uk                                                   | 0191 260 2616 |  |
| Education Scotland - Parentzone | Aims to develop partnerships between parents and schools and provides information to help parents to find out how they can support their child's education in Scotland. | www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone                          |  |  |
| Mind                        | Promotes views and needs of people with mental health problems.             | www.mind.org.uk                                                      |  |  |
| ChildLine Scotland          | Gives confidential information and support to young people. The website gives information on the kind of things that concern or worry young people and can give you some pointers for potential discussion topics. | www.childline.org.uk/    Pages/Home.aspx                        | 0800 1111 (24 hours) |  |
| Thinkuknow                  | Guide to internet safety and safe surfing for young people from Think U Know. Learn about online safety when using blogs, chatting, online gaming, P2P, X Box etc Find out what's good, what's not and what you can do about it. | www.thinkuknow.co.uk                                                | 0870 000 3344 |  |
| See Me                      | A programme that aims to end mental health stigma and discrimination and tackle mental health stigma and discrimination, funded by the Scottish Government and Comic Relief, and managed by SAMH and the Mental Health Foundation. | www.seemescotland.org                                               | 0141 530 1111 |  |
| Beating eating disorders    | Beat provides helplines, online support and a network of UK-wide self-help groups to help adults and young people in the UK beat their eating disorders. | www.b-eat.co.uk                                                     | 0845 634 1414 |  |
| Family Planning Association | Provides information and resources to support parents in talking to their children about sexual health as well as information directly targeted at young people. | www.fpa.org.uk                                                      | 0848 122 8690 |  |
| Rethink                     | Support and advice for people living with mental illness                    | www.rethink.org                                                      | 0300 5000 927 |  |
| Depression Alliance         | Charity for sufferers of depression. Has a network of self-help groups.     | www.depressionalliance.org                                          |  |  |
| CALM                        | Campaign Against Living Miserably, for men aged 15-35                      | www.thecalmzone.net                                                | 0800 58 58 58 |  |
| Samaritans                  | Confidential support for people experiencing feelings of distress.         | www.samaritans.org.uk                                              | 08457 90 90 90 (24 hour helpline) |  |

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Healthy Respect  Provides advice and information to parents and carers on sexual health and relationships, self harm, transgender/gender information as well as downloadable practical resources such as newsletters and toolkits.  

www.healthyrespect.co.uk  
0131 536 1520

Anti-Bullying  Useful information on how to deal with bullying for parents and young people. Contains links to external websites, which you may also find useful.

www.respectme.org.uk/index.html 0844 800 8600

Police  Police Scotland Website

www.scotland.police.uk/forces-welcome/ 0131 555 3940

LGBT Youth Scotland  Gives support and information to young people who are lesbian, gay and bisexual as well as those who are transgender.

www.lgbtyouth.org.uk 0131 475 2399

Shakti Women's Aid  Organisation offering support and information to all black minority ethnic women and their children, experiencing and or fleeing domestic abuse.

www.shaktiedinburgh.co.uk 0131 475 2399

Stress & Anxiety  These sites are designed to help you think about emotional problems and work towards solving them. Emotional problems are often the mind and body's way of saying that something needs to be changed in our life. These guides in the website are most suitable for people experiencing mild to moderate mental health problems.

www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk  
www.stepsforstress.org  
Living life to the full – www.llttf.com

Cruse Bereavement Care Scotland  At Cruse Bereavement Care Scotland (CBCS), we're here to help you through this difficult time. We're able to listen – offering an impartial ear with no agenda – or we can support you via one-to-one counselling sessions where you can work through your grief. 

www.crusescotland.org.uk 0845 600 2227

Child Bereavement UK  Child Bereavement UK supports families and educates professionals when a baby or child of any age dies or is dying, or when a child is facing bereavement. Our vision is for all families to have the support they need to rebuild their lives.

www.childbereavementuk.org/ 0800 02 888 40

Get The Lowdown  Your lowdown on teenage health. This is the place – to look and feel great. Relationships, Family, friends, someone you fancy of bullying.

www.getthelowdown.co.uk 0808 802 4444

Getting It Right For Every Child

Getting It Right For Every Child (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 Headteacher.

The Educational Psychology Service

The Educational Psychology Service (EPS) works with all SBC schools to support children's learning and wellbeing.

We provide advice and training to school staff on how children learn, and advise on ways to help children who require support.

If requested by the school, we can arrange follow-up for individual children and young people, together with their families and teachers, to help support their learning, or with social or emotional issues. This is generally achieved by meeting the children, their families and school staff, to review the support they have already received and agree ways in which we can all help your child in school. In some cases, we may agree that a psychologist will work on a one-to-one basis with your child to obtain a clearer picture of how they can best be supported.

If you have any worries about your child, please contact their school, in the first instance, to arrange a meeting to discuss your concerns. All schools have access to a range of support Services and your child’s Head Teacher will be able to advise you about when the EPS may be able to help.

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.

Please see www.scotborders.gov.uk/EPS
Financial Assistance for School Meals and Uniform
Please scan the QR code shown or visit this web address
www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/594/education_and_school_benefits/332/free_school_meals

School Transport
Pupils in our catchment area are eligible for free travel provided their home is more than three miles from the school. They may travel on special buses or they may be given a pass to use on public transport. Parents moving into the area may contact School Transport Office at SBC Headquarters if transport arrangements have to be made for their children. New S1 pupils receive their bus passes by post during the summer holiday. Where provided, seat belts should be worn on school transport.

Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA)
An EMA has been available to eligible young people remaining in full time education beyond the statutory leaving age of 16. It is a weekly payment made directly to the young person from a family whose annual household income is £22,403 or less. Payments will only be made if the pupil has satisfied attendance requirements. Pupils must complete a learning agreement. Information and application forms are available from the school office.

The Senior Leadership Team
HEADTEACHER:
Mr K Ryalls
DEPUTY HEADTEACHERS:
Mrs P Anderson, Mr M Changlieng and Mr R McLaren
THE PASTORAL STAFF:
Ms F Clarkson (Abbotsford House),
Mr D Crichton (Eildon House),
Miss J McHale (Tweed House),
Mrs L Catto & Mrs S Jordan (Yair House)

School Improvement
The school Improvement Plan and the School Improvement Report are on the school website. This includes information on priorities for improvement and attainment levels and trends.
www.galashiels.org.uk

Details of school policies, activities, groups, trips, pupil council and the calendar are on the school website www.galashiels.org.uk

Clubs
Please see the website for further information: www.galashiels.org.uk
Emergency closure of the 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 Primary School Administrator so that she can record an alternative landline number to contact you on.

Pupils 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 pupils 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, pupils 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 pupils are sent home early due to bad weather or other emergency?
7. The Head Teacher 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.
8. Where pupils 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 pupils being sent home early.
9. Schools routinely communicate with parents or groups of parents using Groupcall text messaging service. Once the decision has been made then Group call will be used to send updated information regarding sending pupils home early.
10. 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.
11. 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 pupils to/from school
12. 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.
13. 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.
14. 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.
School Day
Each day school begins at 8.50am and closes at 3.45 pm Monday to Thursday and 1.20 pm on Fridays. If, for any reason, an earlier closure is arranged, the pupils are given advance notice and provision of shelter/study facilities is made for those who request it. There are 7 periods in the day, Mon-Thurs, and 5 periods on a Friday.
Keeping our children and young people safe in the Scottish Borders

• 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 (http://onlineborders.org.uk/community/cpc) 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 coordinator 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-ordinators for the setting are: Miss Clarkson or any member of SLT or Pastoral.

What to do if you have a child protection concern? (https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/childprotection/)

It’s 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 (http://onlineborders.org.uk/community/cpc) 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

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 brother 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 schools activities therefore missing out on the social aspects of school or their local community.

Within Galashiels Academy 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 for your child in meeting homework deadlines, arriving on time or any other issues which may affect their well being at school. It is the intention of Galashiels Academy staff to offer all support they can to your child.

• Detailed information about the Carers Act 1.4.18 is available on the Scottish Government website (https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Health/Support-Social-Care/Unpaid-Carers/Implementation/Carers-scotland-act-2016)
• More information about the Scottish Borders Young Carers Service is available from the Action for Children website (http://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work-in-scotland)
• The Partnership’s Locality Plans are available at: http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/HSCPLocalityPlans

For more information, contact the Communications and Marketing team on 01835 826632 or communications@scotborders.gov.uk
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 pupil 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 pupil. We need to collect, use and store personal information about you and your child/ren to enable us to provide your child/ren with an appropriate education. We provide these services to you as part of our statutory duties to enable us to provide your child/ren 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
- The 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
- The Education (Scotland) Act 2016
- The Education (Scotland) Act 2016
- The Standard in Scotland’s Schools Act 2000

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.

- 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 (https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20060/access_to_information/877/privacy_statement/9) 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/ren’s educational record up until they reach the age of 25.

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 our website http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/DPYourRights or 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 our website: https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20061/have_your_say/155/make_a_complaint/1