



GEORGE  
WATSON'S  
— COLLEGE —

WATSON'S:  
IMAGINING OUR FUTURE



EX CORDE CARITAS

## WATSON'S: IMAGINING OUR FUTURE

George Watson's College has a history dating back nearly three hundred years to the will of George Watson who died in 1723. The School that was established by his legacy has thrived and flourished in a variety of forms over the centuries.

Over the last two years a great deal of work has been undertaken to imagine how the future of George Watson's College might take shape. A large consultation exercise began on the 360th anniversary of George Watson's birth. In 2014 the Watson's 360 initiative was an opportunity to look back and look forward which involved staff, pupils, parents, former pupils and members of the wider community, including businesses and higher education institutions.

The result was a very encouraging picture of the strengths of the School as well as some exciting ideas about how we could build on the strength we enjoy to adapt for the challenges of the future.

Amongst the strong messages to come from the Watson's 360 process were:

- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the quality of the education and care we provide for their children at Watson's
- They appreciate the inclusivity and "down to earth" qualities of a Watson's education as well as the richness of the opportunities that are on offer
- Parents, pupils and staff are ambitious for the School to broaden its horizons and to look to the future with clarity and confidence

In the following pages we set out how we intend to embrace the challenges and opportunities of the future.

### OUR HISTORY



*George Watson, died on 3 April 1723 leaving most of his fortune of £12,000 [Scots] to fulfil his dream of establishing a hospital school in his name.*

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#### Note on language

"We plan to" means that resources have already been identified and planning is underway.

"We expect to" means that whilst resources have yet to be identified there is a strong likelihood that these plans will come to fruition.

"We aspire to" means that this is a feature of our broader thinking about the future of the School.

## OUR PUPILS: OUR FUTURE

Throughout our history, Watson's has prepared young people to meet the challenges of their day, to lead successful lives and to use the benefits of their education to help make the world a better place. Our Motto *ex corde caritas (love from the heart)* links present day pupils to all those who have gone before. Today we remind pupils that they have a duty both to take full advantage of the opportunities that they have been given and to recognise their responsibilities to others. Put simply, we say "Challenge Yourself: Care for Others".

We aspire to become a fully accredited UNICEF "Rights Respecting School" and to develop the role of our pupils in shaping the School that will in turn shape their own futures. Programmes for pupils in both the Junior and Senior Schools will increasingly provide opportunities for service and leadership both within and outwith the School.

Everything we do in the future will be firmly rooted in ensuring that our pupils gain the best possible start in their lives and that they leave the School with the knowledge, skills and confidence to take their unique place in the world as members of the worldwide Watsonian community.



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### OUR HISTORY



*George Watson's Hospital opened in Archibald Place in 1741 for 11 boys (foundationers). By 1869 there were nearly 100 foundationers.*

## OUR STAFF: AT THE HEART OF OUR SUCCESS

In the future, as now, Watson's will only be as good as the people who work here. We are looking carefully at how to enhance the attractiveness of Watson's as a place to work and how to develop and reward our staff and recognise their outstanding contribution to the lives of our pupils. We want to encourage and enable members of staff to develop still further their impact as role models for pupils as learners, leaders, creative thinkers and contributors to the wider community.

We expect to develop new approaches to training and staff development which will ensure that staff can enhance their professional learning with minimum disruption to the education of pupils. We expect to develop our staff sabbatical programme still further as a means of personal refreshment, professional development and School improvement.

We plan to develop the role of volunteers who give so much to support the education of pupils in a great diversity of roles throughout the School.



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### OUR HISTORY



GEORGE WATSON'S COLLEGE-SCHOOLS  
FOR BOYS.

*In 1870 the hospital school became a day school for boys and was renamed 'George Watson's Boys' College'.*

## **FUTURE LEARNING: FUTURE TEACHING**

A relevant, rigorous and intellectually exciting academic education will continue to be at the core of pupils' lives at school. We want all pupils to sense the limitless possibilities of the human mind, to experience a thrill in learning new things and to make excellent progress towards ambitious goals.

At Watson's we do not accept that there is any contradiction in being academically ambitious and academically inclusive. We have long been leaders in supporting children who experience barriers to their learning as well as stretching those who find lessons easier. We retain a strong commitment to developing excellent practice in Support for Learning.

As we move forward, we will be paying particular attention to the quality, range and focus of our curriculum and the arrangements we have in place to support and guide pupils at all ages.

We plan to increase the number of Nursery places for three year olds and we are exploring the possibility of offering Nursery places for younger children, too. This will help to ensure that more pupils can benefit from a Watson's education throughout their school days.

We recognise that a single curriculum model may not suit all pupils and we will explore ways in which we can incorporate a broader range of curricular pathways. These may suit pupils who may not wish to enter university in the traditional way or those for whom our usual examination diet may not be sufficiently stretching.

Our curriculum will continue to develop new and exciting dimensions, including greater capacity for high quality interdisciplinary learning and the incorporation of international perspectives throughout.

Our International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme will continue to be the centrepiece of our international approach as we will make many of the beneficial aspects of this programme available to a wider range of pupils.

Learning is becoming increasingly fluid and self-directed and the school curriculum and pedagogy must therefore adapt accordingly. Our significant investment in infrastructure has already enabled us to support one to one iPad use in the Junior School and the use of pupils' own devices in the Senior School. We plan to build on the success of these initiatives.



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However, all pupils also need a solid grounding in the basics of numeracy and literacy and in the skills and good habits of effective study if they are to succeed. They also need to be equipped with the experiences, skills and attitudes which will prepare them for the world of higher education and work, whatever their ultimate ambitions may be.

We will continue to develop innovative and effective teaching at all levels in the School, adapting the best available practice in self-evaluation and data based analysis to support excellent pedagogy. We are determined to ensure that all pupils are enabled to gain the most out of their education here.

We will continue to place great emphasis on the importance of extra-curricular clubs and societies in developing skills and enthusiasms for pupils of all ages.

We expect to make Science, Technology and Engineering an even greater focus of excellence within the School, developing the many links that the School already enjoys with universities and other institutions in Edinburgh and further afield.

We plan to inaugurate the MacQuarrie Fellowship<sup>1</sup> which will fund a postgraduate research scientist to work alongside our Sixth Year pupils and enhance their access to scientific education at the highest level.

We already sponsor five Arkwright Scholarships which support promising Young Engineers from state schools to work with our own senior pupils and teachers in our Technology Department and we aspire to enhance the positive impact of this scheme over time.

We also expect to enhance the support and guidance offered to pupils throughout the School by new approaches to health and wellbeing, including mental health. We want to encourage resilience and a growth mindset in all our pupils, whilst recognising that for an increasing minority of young people the stresses and strains of life require specialist support and guidance.

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<sup>1</sup> Funded by a Legacy of the late Ian Campbell MacQuarrie (Class of 1953)

## THE WATSONIANS: A NETWORK FOR THE FUTURE

Our network of Former Pupils is one of the great assets of the School. Whether or not they are well known to the public, Watsonians provide invaluable support to the School through the George Watson's Family Foundation and directly in many other ways. We aspire to strengthen and deepen still further the ties between the School and its Former Pupils and between Former Pupils themselves and to find new and imaginative ways in which they may help and inspire our current pupils and contribute to the broader success of the School.



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### OUR HISTORY



*In 1871 George Watson's Ladies' College was opened in Admiral Duncan's House in George Square.*

## THE CAMPUS OF THE FUTURE

Our Campus Masterplan Vision provides an exciting glimpse of how George Watson's College might look in about 20 years' time. By sympathetically extending and improving our historic buildings and replacing some modern additions which are coming to the end of their useful life, we aspire to enhance our campus as a safe, practical and inspiring place to work.

Particular emphasis has been placed on the use of internal spaces to encourage innovative learning and positive social interaction between pupils and between pupils and adults. Specialist areas that have been identified for significant upgrading include Science, Art, Drama, Piping and Health and Food Technology where we aspire to create truly "hands on" learning in a hospitality space where pupils would cater for guests. There would be a studio theatre capable of hosting visiting companies as well as providing a venue for pupil led drama. We also plan to create more specialist teaching spaces in the Junior School, especially for Modern Languages.

The first phase of the Campus Masterplan which will involve significant remodelling of the Junior School should be complete by the beginning of Session 2019/20.

In sport, we aspire to create additional facilities to support an even wider range of sport and physical education options, from social sport to elite athlete training.

We will take every opportunity to build in environmental sustainability as our campus is developed and aspire to make the campus fully accessible to people with disabilities with the minimum of delay.



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### OUR HISTORY



*In 1932 the boys' school moved to Colinton Road.*

## CHALLENGE AND ENLIGHTENMENT: GETTING OUT OF THE CLASSROOM

Watson's has a formidable reputation as a leading school for outdoor education and our S3 Projects programme is a unique part of the experience of pupils at the School. We expect to enhance our practice by ensuring that outdoor education is a key feature throughout pupils' school career.

We will examine the role of trust funds held by the School to promote opportunities for pupils to travel on their own initiative, taking the model of the Don Mercer Australian Exchange<sup>2</sup> in ensuring that these life enhancing opportunities are not limited to those whose family circumstances are more affluent.

We look forward to inaugurating new opportunities such as the John Martin Cricket Scholarship<sup>3</sup> which will enable pupils to pursue interests and enthusiasms to new levels once they have left school and projects to enable pupils to take internships in other parts of the world.



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<sup>2</sup> *The Don Mercer Australian Exchange has been endowed by Mr Don Mercer (Class of 1959) and provides a three week exchange experience for two pupils at little or no cost to them or their families.*

<sup>3</sup> *Funded by the Legacy of the Late John D Martin (Class of 1959)*

## LEADING THINKING AND CREATIVITY

We plan to create ever more opportunities for pupils to engage with those of their own age and older who have different experiences and approaches to learning or specialist knowledge to excite and inspire them.

We aspire to build on the existing excellence of our drama and music, including our world renowned Pipe Bands, to create even more opportunities for our pupils' self-expression and aesthetic education. We will continue to be open to partnerships which enhance and deepen the experience of pupils and their links with the creative professions and industries.

We aspire to build on the notable successes of our Art and Design Department, bringing together current and former pupils' work in a major exhibition during 2018/19. We will use our recently endowed Art Fund to purchase significant works of art for educational purposes and to enhance the environment of the School.

We expect to develop our annual Festival of Ideas as a vehicle for introducing senior pupils, in particular, to a wide range of ideas and different intellectually stimulating experiences.

Where feasible, all these opportunities will be available to pupils in neighbouring schools and to local residents.

**The Stewart Lockhart Collection** is one of the world's most significant collections of Chinese and Oriental art, artefacts and archival material. It was gifted to George Watson's College by the daughter of Sir James Haldane Stewart Lockhart (1858–1937), a Former Pupil who amassed the Collection during his 40 years as a colonial administrator in Hong Kong and China. The School is committed to working with partners in the National Museum of Scotland, the National Library of Scotland and the National Galleries of Scotland to make the Collection available for scholarly and other educational uses. We expect to mount an exhibition of some items from the Collection in a prominent venue during 2018/19.



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## SPORTING AMBITION

The sporting programme at Watson's is outstanding for its breadth and depth and for the successes enjoyed by our competitive teams across a wide variety of sports. We are ambitious to build on that success to create even more opportunities in the future.

We hope to be able to agree a long term arrangement for Edinburgh Rugby to use Myreside as their home ground. This is an important part of our strategy to make George Watson's College a place which provides social benefit to the community as a whole as well as for members of the Watson's Family.

Edinburgh Rugby's outreach programme will complement that of the School and the Watsonian Sports' Sections<sup>4</sup> which already provide opportunities for thousands of people to enjoy a wide variety of sporting opportunities on the School site.

We aspire to work with commercial, educational and third sector partners to unlock the potential of our sporting and social facilities to be a resource for the community. Greater investment along with careful management will ensure that greater use will also enhance the facilities available for our pupils and not lead to any detriment to them or to existing community use.



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<sup>4</sup> Most Watsonian Sports' Sections have open membership; you do not have to be a Former Pupil to join

## WIDENING ACCESS: BROADENING OPPORTUNITIES

We plan to enhance our existing Foundation Places programme which can provide free places at Watson's for children whose parents would not otherwise be able to afford the fees.

We want our new Foundation Places to widen access to a Watson's education still further, by positively facilitating applications from parts of the community that have not traditionally seen Watson's as a place of aspiration. We plan to identify the barriers that currently impede the parents of potential pupils from applying for our Foundation Places and work co-operatively with partners to overcome them.

We recognise that some pupils may need particular support in settling into the School and taking full advantage of what the School offers and our Outreach Programme will also seek to ensure that all the support needed is freely available.

We will also examine how summer schools, subject specific conferences and music and drama opportunities, amongst others, can also provide opportunities for young people to benefit from what Watson's has to offer.



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### OUR HISTORY



*In 1975 the boys' and the girls' school joined together to make one coeducational school which was named 'George Watson's College'.*

## LOCAL ROOTS

George Watson's College is an integral part of the educational life of the City of Edinburgh. We are proud of our role in establishing the Swire Chinese Language Centre in Edinburgh and we will be looking for other opportunities to make a positive impact on education in the City and further afield.

We plan to develop the Watson's Educational Forum which provides opportunities for leaders in all sectors of education in the City of Edinburgh to meet informally to discuss matters of common interest.

We plan to inaugurate a formal Neighbourhood Liaison Group to enable us to consult our neighbours about our future plans and to respond to any routine issues that occur. We expect that our Campus Masterplan will lead to an improvement in the traffic management on and around our campus and we aspire to develop a more "smart" travel plan to reduce the impact of the school run on the area.

We will explore other ways in which the social benefit of the School as a significant employer in the area can be enhanced.

We aspire to have Community Action and Service as part of the school experience for all of our pupils, both because it is right in itself and because it is the most obvious demonstration of *ex corde caritas*.



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## GEORGE WATSON'S INTERNATIONAL

Watson's has longstanding and deep links with many places around the world and we expect to build on those in the coming years. Our International Baccalaureate Diploma programme gives our pupils access to an internationally recognised qualification with which they may seek admission to almost any university in the UK or around the world.

We are actively looking for additional opportunities for our pupils and former pupils to experience life and learning in different parts of the world and in different cultures. We aspire to form a network of schools around the world which share a similar ethos and which will enable pupil and staff links to develop over time. We expect to deepen the curriculum links which we already enjoy with many countries and to further enhance the experience of Modern Languages, not least in the Junior School where we plan to ensure that all pupils will have access to French, Spanish and Chinese before they move to the Senior School.

We aspire to provide an international residential facility within the School when resources allow. This will permit a small number of international students to experience a Watson's education in S5 and S6 and to enhance the experience of other pupils.

We are also assessing the desirability and practicality of working with partners to establish international schools abroad. We believe that we have a set of characteristics which would bring exceptional value to the educational proposition of an international school and that such a school (or schools) could deepen and make ever more real the understanding of other countries and cultures by our pupils and staff.

We wish to ensure that our motto of *ex corde caritas* is as evident in our international links as it is in other aspects of the School, for example by establishing more focused and sustainable links with Malawi and by ensuring that social responsibility is at the core of any international partnerships that we form.

We believe that this is an ambitious and exciting vision for George Watson's College over the next few years. We look forward to turning this vision into reality with the support of all branches of the Watson's family and the School's many friends at home and abroad.



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