



Our Journey to becoming an SCQF Bronze Ambassador School

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Background to the school

St Columba's High School is a Catholic school serving the South-west of Greenock along with Gourrock and the villages of Inverkip and Wemyss Bay. We occupy a modern school campus overlooking the Firth of Clyde and have a capacity for 686 pupils. The school roll has steadily increased in recent years and in session 2021-2022, the roll was 704 pupils. Around 49% of our pupils live in SIMD 1-3.

Our values:

Faith, Ambition, Inclusion, Perseverance

Our Vision:

The community of St Columba's High School nurtures every young person's God-given talents. We offer each young person the opportunity to achieve and grow in an environment of love and respect.

Our Aim:

To offer rich learning experiences which inspire engagement and enable all young people to thrive both within and beyond the classroom.

Our vision, values and aim sum up our commitment to ensuring that St Columba's High School is a nurturing and inclusive school committed to high levels of support, participation and achievement for all. Becoming an SCQF Ambassador school, therefore, made perfect sense as we looked to broaden the variety of pathways on offer in our Senior Phase.

Raising Awareness

Our journey towards Bronze began way back in February 2020. We had invited Donnie Wood to speak to all staff and lots of great ideas were shared and excitement began to build about the possibilities for our young people. Little did we know that just a few weeks later, our normal day to day school life would be put on hold due to a global pandemic!

Fast forward to 2022 and we decided it was time to pick up where we left off. We approached the newly introduced Barista Skills SCQF Level 5 class and invited S6 pupils to volunteer as our SCQF Ambassadors. The Ambassadors were introduced to the Framework, familiarised themselves with the array of SCQF materials and proudly displayed SCQF Ambassador badges on their blazers!

Promoting the principles & benefits of the SCQF... ...to Pupils

An SCQF stall will be set up at our Options Event for S3/4/5 and our Ambassadors will be available to answer questions from pupils.

Our Ambassadors will present to all Year Groups during SCQF Week in March.

... to Parents

An SCQF stall has been set up at Parents' evenings this session and the Parent Council have been kept up to date with our progress as an Ambassador school.



Community



We regularly promote the SCQF on Twitter and on our school website.

We were delighted to be the first school in Inverclyde to achieve Bronze status and our fantastic SCQF Ambassadors have been great at posing for a photo or two!

Curricular Changes

Since embarking on the SCQF Ambassador school journey, we have widened the range of courses we offer year on year, particularly in the Senior Phase. It has now become the norm that all curricular areas are actively looking for any additional courses or pathways they can introduce.

We are also committed to introducing new opportunities for wider achievement in the BGE. Our School garden and 'Columbuzz' Bee hive is now firmly established and, going forward, we will be looking to introduce accreditation through these valuable outdoor learning projects.

Moving forward....

We are evaluating where we are currently and hope to apply for Silver Ambassador status very soon!

Pupil Quotes

'Doing Barista skills has really helped my confidence and I was able to get work experience in a local café because of it.' **S5 Barista Skills Pupil**

'The Health Sector class has helped me make my mind up that I definitely want to do something like this in the future. I'm now looking into how to become a paramedic.'

S4 Health Sector Pupil

'The Level 7 Science Baccalaureate was introduced for the first time when I was in S6. It was really interesting and was totally different to any other school course I had studied. It helped me prepare for the type of project I would have to undertake at university.'

Former pupil now studying Prosthetics & Orthotics at Strathclyde University

Final thoughts....

If you are reading this and thinking about becoming an SCQF Ambassador School, I would recommend you just go for it!

The SCQF staff are all extremely helpful and the process of gathering evidence to apply for Bronze status is very straightforward - exactly what busy teachers need!