

Latin at Kirkcaldy High School

What would you see, if you visited one of the Latin classes at Kirkcaldy High School? You would see very full classes. At each level through the school, the Latin classes are pretty much full, i.e. usually 33 pupils in a class, and occasionally more!

You would see that there is a gender balance of boys and girls.

You would see pupils who are able and successful learners, and others who are less able.

These, the less academic one, will not manage a level beyond National 3 or National 4 Latin, but they are just as welcome in the Latin class as the more able ones. You will see that Latin is truly for everyone.

There would be those who are poor attenders and those who have experienced (or are experiencing) adversity in their lives. There would be those who struggle with their literacy or have additional support needs, either in learning or their behaviour ... and they are ALL welcome in the Latin class, and they know and value that.

For example, in a current busy S4 Latin class (15- 16 year olds) of 31 pupils, 17 have additional support needs – that means more than half the class.

These, and all other pupils, know that when they come to Latin, they will get a top quality learning experience, something which they will, hopefully, remember all their lives.

When the exam results come out every year, for many of these pupils, Latin will either be their best result or else it will be the only subject they will have sat and passed. The Scottish Government is very keen on what it calls “closing the attainment gap”, meaning that pupils from poorer backgrounds are entitled to the same educational chances as those from more affluent areas, and what better way of closing this gap than to offer Latin as widely as possible?

Jennifer Shearer

Kirkcaldy High School

Fife

