

Greenfield Academy: One year on, how is campus life at Dundee's £100m 'super-school'?

Braeview Academy and Craigie High School merged in 2025 to become Greenfield Academy, located on the new Drumgeith Community Campus. How did year one go?



Greenfield Academy pupils Heidi Thomson and Beth Esplin. Image: Steve Brown/DC Thomson



By **Rebecca Baird**

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“I think it’s fair to say this past year has been challenging,” admits Greenfield Academy head teacher Johnny Lothian.

“We’ve had to establish a new school, and everyone has made that transition – pupils and staff alike.

“But I think we’ve done really well.”

It’s been a year since Braeview Academy and Craigie High School merged to become Greenfield Academy, the secondary school at the heart of Dundee’s new Drumgeith Community Campus.

Costing £100 million, the campus took two years to build.

Bright and airy, it boasts state-of-the-art sports facilities, including 3G and 4G football pitches and a dance studio.

It also features fully kitted-out drama classrooms, an impressive science block, and a community library which is open to members of the public.

The development faced [flooding concerns and community backlash](#) during initial consultations, with Douglas residents opposing the relocation of some local services to the new building.

Locals also raised concerns that plans for the campus did not include a swimming pool.



Greenfield Academy at Drumgeith Community Campus. Image: Kim Cessford/DC Thomson.

But after opening its doors to 1,500 young people last August, it was met with [positive reviews from senior pupils](#).

And with the exception of [repairs to the gym and games facilities](#) during the Easter break, there have been no reported issues with the Greenfield building.

But has the state-of-the-art campus led to a state-of-the-art education?

As the school entered its second year, we met senior leaders, pupils and community partners to find out how year one has been at Greenfield Academy.

How did merging two schools work?

For former Morgan Academy rector Johnny, 52, the focus for year one at Greenfield was on creating a new, shared culture of safety and inclusivity between the two merging schools.

“To me, they’re not Braeview bairns or Craigie bairns,” says the father-of-four.

“They’re all Greenfield, and I think that’s down to the planning that was done before the move.”

Johnny says staff, pupils and parents were brought together, helping build relationships before Greenfield opened.



Head teacher Johnny Lothian at Greenfield Academy. Image: Steve Brown/DC Thomson.

For the pupils, that meant new friendships were already blossoming before term began.

“I was a bit worried about how chaotic it was going to be,” admits 13-year-old Beth Esplin, who was in the first S1 intake at Greenfield last year.

“You didn’t know how everybody was going to be with everyone else. But the teachers and the senior pupils really helped smooth it all over.”

This was especially important in the face of a daunting new building where no one would know their way around.



S2 pupil Austin Mitchell at Greenfield Academy. Image: Steve Brown/DC Thomson.

“It was really big and crowded at first, and no one knew where they were going so we didn’t have buddies,” recalls S2 pupil Austin Mitchell.

“It was a struggle to find your way to your classroom and things. But now we all know and I’m one of the buddies for the new S1s, so I can help them.”

And early figures suggest that focus on school culture is paying off in the classroom.

Attendance and attainment on rise at Greenfield Academy

“Attendance is up 0.5% on 2025 at Craigie and Braeview,” explains Johnny.

“And in terms of attainment, we saw a 14% increase in the number of young people passing Qualifications Scotland exams.

“Our S4 and S5 results have all improved compared to the legacy schools’ performances in 2025, with our S4 results being particularly encouraging.”

When I ask why that might be, Johnny explains: “We provide opportunities beyond the classroom, and already we’re seeing a huge impact, particularly in music and sports.

“We were delighted to win the Dundee Active Schools ‘School of the Year’ award in our first full session, recognising the range and number of opportunities we provide.”

‘Everything just works’

Indeed, the common theme among the pupils is that at Greenfield, “everything just works”.



Greenfield Academy pupils Scarlett Forrester, Hali Sage and Aimee Smith discuss the first year of the school's operations with head teacher Johnny Lothian.

Image: Steve Brown/DC Thomson.

“I take music and drama, and the departments here are just unbelievable,” says S6 pupil Hali Sage.

“All the drama classrooms have their own lighting rigs which are high-tech and fun to use, so you can decide if you want to do the technical aspect or the creative stuff.”

For some pupils, like 17-year-old Aimee Smith, the upgraded school has opened up a whole new world of career possibilities.

“Before we came here, I was really undecided about what I wanted to do,” says Aimee, who is in her final year of school.

“But seeing the drama studios and how everything worked in them, especially the technical stuff, has made me want to pursue that as a career.”

The sports facilities are equally popular, with pupils hailing the well-stocked gym, large halls, and Astroturf pitches – and no one seems fazed by the lack of a pool.



Greenfield Academy pupils from S2 to S6 spoke to The Courier about their first year in the new school. Image: Steve Brown/DC Thomson.

S6 pupil Ollie Maxwell praised the two football pitches, saying they have been well maintained.

And rugby player Scarlett Forrester, who represented Scotland internationally earlier this year, said: “We’ve got the grass rugby pitch here, and we can use the Astro as well – plus there’s loads of tackle bags.

“At Braeview, they were all split and we couldn’t really use them.”

Does community campus setup benefit pupils?

Johnny explains that the operation of the school within the wider Drumgeith Community Campus has allowed pupils to experience career opportunities that they wouldn’t have had otherwise.

One example of this is a weekly Bookbug reading group for young children in the campus’ community library.

“We have some of the pupils who are studying childcare coming down to the Bookbug group to get a taste of what a session is like, and what would be expected if they were delivering it,” explains library officer Gillian McEwen, 36.



Library and information officer Gillian McEwan at Greenfield Academy. Image: Steve Brown/DC Thomson.

The Drumgeith community library replaced two local branches – the Hub library and the Whitfield Crescent library.

It is open to the local community, providing a free space for people to read, take part in ad-hoc activities, or for younger siblings and parents to wait while pupils attend clubs outside of school hours.

Gillian believes the new library being attached to a school “gives us the opportunity to pull more people in and get them interested in reading”.

Girls’ sports participation ‘through the roof’

Meanwhile Active Schools co-ordinator Keiran Foy, 32, hails the “Noah’s Ark” that is Greenfield’s community sport offering.

“There’s two of everything!” he says. “Two big halls, two wee halls, two Astros, two tennis courts.

“That’s drawn both pupils and community towards sport activities.”

He says [community sports groups](#) such as Saltire Gymnastics, Dancelicious, Dundee Rugby, Dundee Madsons Basketball Club and the Strong Girls Club have all made use of the new facilities.

And that particularly for girls, who are more likely to drop sports at secondary school, Greenfield has been “a game-changer”.



Active Schools Coordinator Keiran Foy hailed Greenfield Academy's facilities.
Image: Steve Brown/DC Thomson.

"It's a place that the girls want to come to" says Keiran. "The changing rooms are bright and colourful and they've got a fitness studio that's sparkling – it inspires them.

"We kind of thought it might be a bit shaky coming from two schools into one, but it's actually gone the other way, which has been really nice.

"Our numbers for girls participating in sports went through the roof – 30% across all years participated."

'A big year' ahead for Greenfield

For Johnny, taking on a challenge was part of the appeal when he went for the role of head teacher at Greenfield Academy.

He reckons the school has had a "strong start" – but there's more to do.

In terms of community partnerships, he identifies adult learning activities as "something we hope to do more of".

And he intends to build on the established school culture to encourage academic success and “improve outcomes for young people and families in East End and North East”.

“We’ve got high ambitions for our young people and we absolutely are going to push them to succeed,” he says.

“So this is going to be a big year for us.”