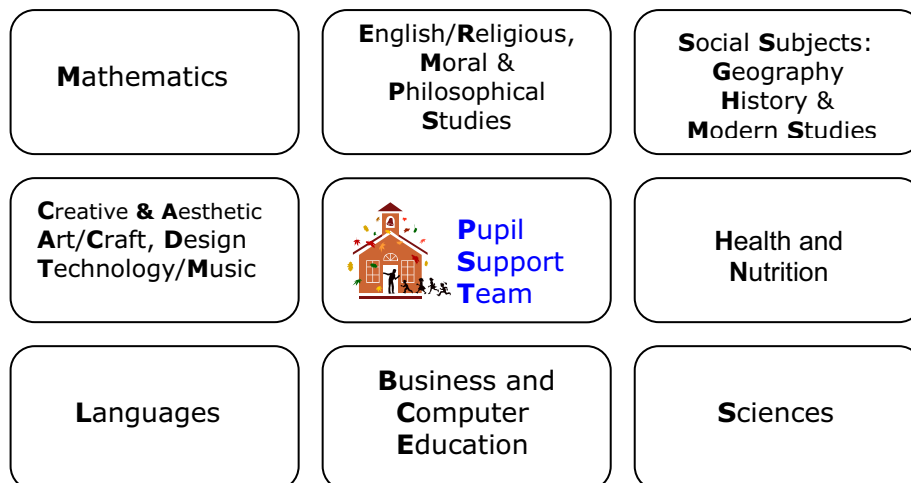


# Dingwall Academy Standards and Quality Report 2004-2005

## Framework for Learning

This session has been an extremely busy one in terms of new staff arriving at Dingwall Academy. In total, some 22 new teachers entered our school, 5 being probationer teachers. In addition to this, the school embarked on a major reorganisation in terms of how the departments within the school are organised. Our new faculty structure looks like this:



Throughout the session there has been probationer and new personnel support; there is a greater awareness of the compulsory continuing professional development of all staff within the school and teachers are taking more responsibility for their own professional development. To assist with support for new staff a seconded Principal Teacher post has been created within the school.

There was an increase in cross-curricular group discussion sessions, organised to look at various features of school life relating to improved teaching and assessment. In part these sessions reflect the school's commitment to embracing a whole-school approach to the educational initiative *Assessment is for Learning* which is intended to raise attainment. However, work still has to be done to ensure that professional development programmes exist for all staff groups and at present the newly appointed Heads of Faculty have yet to receive the support and training necessary to fulfil these newly created management posts.

There has been considerable investment in ICT provision across the school and there is a much greater use of multi-media projection across the curriculum. Social Sciences and BCE have developed staff and student bases, in the latter instance helping to provide greater flexibility in booking computer rooms for use by the whole school. Alongside traditional displays of student work there has been greater use of electronic displays and school made films within the school, most notably at the regular achievement assemblies, which recognise all forms of achievement within school life.

Our traditional House system has been altered this year and includes the new House of Fairburn; this name was selected because of the school's various visits there, ranging from the 3 day S1 residential literacy/outdoor activity visit to the high achievers focus groups and the Activity Day sessions held at the Outdoor Residential Centre. The new House system and allocated Pupil Support teachers is now:

| Brahan       | Fairburn    | Novar        | Tulloch      | Wyvis                      |
|--------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| Mrs.M Easton | Mrs.H Carey | Mr.S Gaffney | Mrs. S Parke | Mrs.E Fyffe/<br>Mr J. Kerr |

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As you will know, we are very proud of our Spring, Christmas and Prize-giving musical concerts. These provide a wonderful showcase for the many talented musicians in the school and stem from much hard work from the students themselves and the staff of the Music and Art departments, who put so much effort into preparing the students and decorating the hall.

Our Christmas concert is also taken to Wyvis House Residential Home and Ross Memorial Hospital. When the assembly hall is fully decorated, our students also enjoy their annual Socials, which are very well attended and it is wonderful to see the effort made by students to dress up and participate in well rehearsed social dancing. Our participation in the Scottish Youth Drama Association is famed in the region and once again we produced three plays which were entered into local competitions. Our annual Talent Show is now an established part of the academic calendar and whilst being great fun, also allows the student organisers to make a valuable contribution to local charities.

Indeed, the senior students play a full and active role in many aspects of academy life. Of particular note is their input into our Buddy system through which our seniors support the newly arrived junior students. The seniors initially work with the Pupil Support Team in training activities then take the skills they have learned into the corridors of school life, working to ensure that the youngest students in the academy thrive in their transitional phase. The seniors also organise a special Buddy Disco for the youngsters and this has been a great success in recent years. Buddies have also provided support to students with additional support needs and to students experiencing behavioural and attendance problems.

Many of the Buddies also act as *Book Buddies* to the new first years and support juniors during their library periods. The success of the Book Buddy programme was highlighted this year in *The Scottish Support for Learning Association's Handbook of Good Practice in Scottish Schools*.

Our seniors also play an important part in supporting primary sports and the P.E department is in the process of introducing a Sports Buddy system to help youngsters to do well in classes and in the many extra-curricular sport classes on offer here at the academy. A new Sports Leader course is being offered to middle school students to further the possibilities of peer support whilst also adding a valuable qualification to the c.v's of participating students.

This year our seniors again produced their own yearbook with the support of the English department and we hope this will provide pleasant memories of the time these young people have spent with us. It goes without saying that we wish each and every one of our leavers the very best in their future lives and we look forward to hearing of the great things they will achieve in life.

