

Dingwall Academy Standards and Quality Report 2004-2005

Inclusion and Equality

Dingwall Academy like all modern schools is working hard to ensure that all our children are treated equally and enjoy equality of opportunity irrespective of social, religious or ethnic background. Recent Equalities legislation and Child Protection Policy means there is now a specific responsibility on local authorities to eliminate what the educational writer Reiser describes as, "the deeply held social attitudes that reflect generations of prejudice, fear and discrimination towards disabled people in education, work and social life." This includes students who experience physical or mental impairment such as sensory impairment and those with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia.



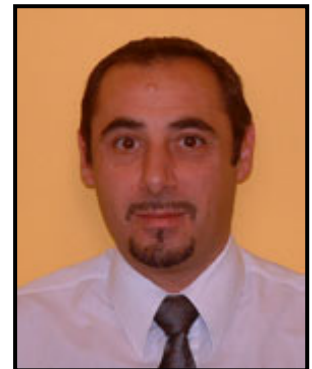
John Mackay
Lower School
Depute Rector

In terms of ICT literacy, the PC Passport is now offered to all staff, including auxiliary staff. Intermediate awards at level 1 and 2 are now on offer to S5/S6 students who have not completed ICT courses in Standard Grade.

Whilst as a general policy the school adheres to language study as an entitlement as part of the 1992 *Languages for All* strategy, some students are allowed to study for Social and Vocational Skills courses during Standard Grade language periods. Furthermore, Intermediate 1 Spanish and Russian have been introduced this session; Access 3 is proposed in French and Spanish next session.

Intermediate 1 Woodwork Skills and Intermediate 1 Engineering/Craft Skills have replaced Craft and Design Standard Grades in S3/S4 and there has been an increased uptake of courses. College placements at NVQ1 level are also proving popular.

The P.E department embraces inclusive policy in terms of access to all extra-curricular clubs and is widely known, participates in regional and national competitions at all levels with good levels of success. Also, there are individualised SEN sports programmes and an ongoing commitment to sporting support for St. Clements School. The House system includes all and event points are offered to all participants.



Mario Di Carlo
Middle School
Depute Rector

The Mathematics department offers high-level collaboration with the Pupil Support Team and offers good course progression routes for late developers. Similarly, Social Subjects offer subject specific tutorial support for students and this faculty also liaises effectively with the Autistic Unit. There is also close liaison with the Gaelic Medium Unit and the faculty is now offering Gaelic Medium Geography at S.Grade. The Science Faculty also provides good support through its small group approach to teaching students with additional support needs.



Karen Cormack
Upper School
Depute Rector

In English, The Literacy Project continues to provide well for those struggling with basic literacy in S1. There is a three-day residential retreat, which focuses on confidence building and reading skills. A timetabled phonic decoding reading catch-up programme is in place for the least able 20% of S1 students and there has been considerable investment in technological reading

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support from the Scottish Executive and British Telecommunications to support this initiative. Last year £17,000 was secured and this has allowed an IT lending library to be created and major progress to be made in the area of media literacy.

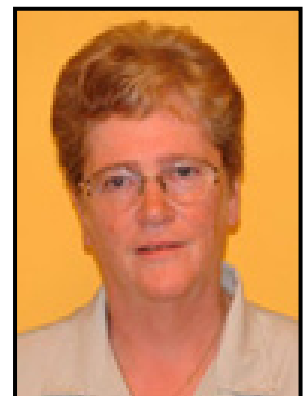


Laptops and other resources are lent to participating students through the **Book Talk** project, which also does sterling work in supporting the Autistic Unit and various other client groups within school. These resources have also been shared with Ross County Football Club who use them with groups of adults who are trying to return to the world of work. Although ultimately unsuccessful, the **Book Talk** project was entered into this year's Highland Council Quality Awards in the *Innovative use of Technology* category. The school is working with The University of Aberdeen Education Faculty to evaluate this project

with a view to sharing more widely the opportunities and pitfalls of this type of IT/SEN approach.

Hearing Impaired students are well catered for in the school and are fully included in curricular and extra-curricular activities. Special note should be made of student successes in Drama, Sports and Mathematics. There are signing classes for staff which have resulted in achievements in Intermediate 1 Deaf Studies. There are also lunchtime Social Signing groups for pupils. We also hope that senior student *Hearing Buddies* will work with the Hearing Impairment Unit again next session.

The Alternative Curriculum Group serves an important function for some students with additional support needs. Swimming and horse riding are key activities here, involving academy students and students from St.Clement's; some academy students attend St.Clement's and vice-versa; some of the former acting as helpers, the latter as students to participate in the PE Core Group swimming, and in the school sports. Special mention should be made of the remarkable achievements of David Hillis and Ionusta McClelland in representing the Highlands and Scotland at the Special Olympics.



Catriona Lowe
Support for
Learning
Depute Rector

The multi-agency School Liaison Group continues to pull expertise to work on solutions for students with specific individual needs; evening Parenting Groups are run by our Senior Family Liaison Officer offering mutual support to both Primary and Secondary parents. There has also been success in using the medium of the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award for students, including school refusers who are struggling to access the mainstream curriculum.