

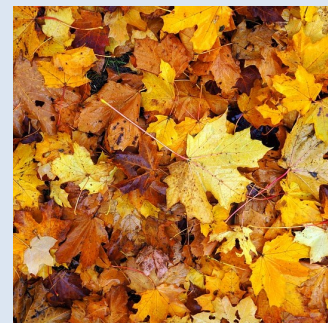


# Dingwall Academy *News*

## Strathpuffer Stars!



**Read more about the amazing success of the Dingwall Academy teams at the recent Strathpuffer24 event next month!**



## JANUARY 2018

**Thursday 1st February —**  
S2 Parent Contact evening

**Monday 19th & Tuesday  
20th February —** Holiday

**Wed 21st February —** In  
Service day; school closed to pupils

**Tuesday 6th March —**  
DTP/MENACWY injections  
for S3 pupils

**Tuesday 20th March —**  
S3 Parent Contact evening

**Saturday 24th March —**  
Spring Fair

**Wednesday 28th March —**  
school closes for Easter  
holidays

**Monday 16th April —**  
School opens

# Welcome ...

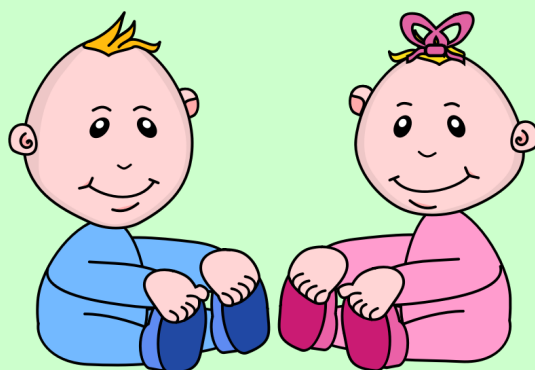
## Staff News

At the start of this term we were delighted to welcome new staff to Dingwall Academy. Ms J Kerr joins the school as Depute Head Teacher, Pupil Support. Mrs R Wylie joins the Learning Support team and is based in Behaviour Support. Mrs R Miller joins the Maths Department, Mrs Miller worked previously in Kingussie High School. Mrs K Nakau joined the Computing Department before Christmas, she had been teaching in Edinburgh.

These new names and faces will become familiar to parents and staff throughout this term, but to give some background, the Literacy Ambassadors interviewed two of our new members of staff, Ms Kerr and Mrs Nakau. Read more about this on the next page.

*We are enjoying a baby boom at Dingwall Academy this session. Last term Mrs Arkley (English), Mrs Reid (Gaelic), and Mrs Millar (CDT) gave birth to baby girls. Mrs Hannah (Maths) welcomed the arrival of her twin boys. And just before Christmas, Ms Bennie (PE) welcomed her baby boy into the world.*

*Congratulations to them all. You will see these teachers around school over the next few weeks as they pop in to stay in touch.*



# Welcome ...



## **Ms Kerr, tell us a bit about your career?**

*Prior to coming here I was Principal Teacher of Learning Support at Millburn Academy for 10 years. Before that I was an Additional Support Needs teacher in North Lanarkshire schools and I also worked in Hospitals with adults with Learning Difficulties. Early in my career I worked in Seattle for a year.*

## **What are your hobbies and interests?**

*I enjoy being active and compete in triathlons. I try to have a really positive outlook on life.*

## **What are your first impressions of Dingwall Academy?**

*It is a lovely, colourful and friendly school.*

## **Where did you work before coming to Dingwall Academy?**

Before coming to Dingwall Academy I worked at Holy Rood RC High School in Edinburgh. It was my first teaching job out of University. Holy Rood had over 1000 pupils similar to Dingwall Academy.

## **How are you liking Dingwall Academy?**

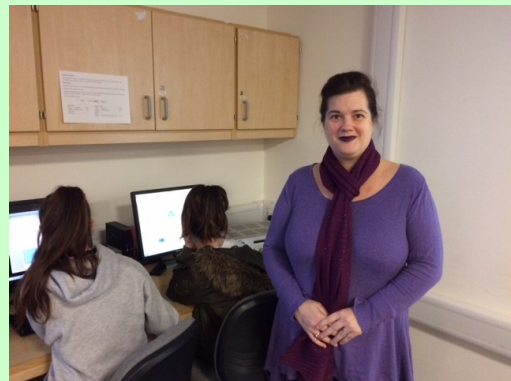
I felt very at home the minute I walked through the door when I came up to visit before applying for the job. I am from Skye originally and have family in the Black Isle and spent lots of my summer holidays here as a child. I feel like I have come home. The staff and pupils are all very friendly and I have noticed that I get lots of pupils saying thank you after a lesson. I am still struggling to remember all the names of staff and pupils but that is a challenge of the job no matter where you are!

## **What subject do you teach and what do you enjoy about it?**

I teach Computing Science and I am also qualified to teach Mathematics. I particularly enjoy the challenge of programming although it is an area that many students find difficult. I hope my enthusiasm for coding encourages them to overcome the hurdles. Computing Science is rarely dull as it is constantly changing and we have to keep up-to date with the ever changing world of technology. On the news today they were saying that soon one in four of the existing jobs in a city like Glasgow would become automated. Computing Scientists will be the workforce involved in the jobs of the future.

## **4. Where can people find you within the school?**

I am based on the second floor in room 212, at break you will find me enjoying a coffee with the rest of the staff in the staff room. I've joined the staff choir so will be spending at least one lunchbreak at choir practice!



# Exams and options

## Exam preparation

Senior Phase pupils are now coming to the end of their prelim examinations. Pupils now need to take time to reflect on the experience and to think about how well prepared they were. We would encourage pupils to think about what worked for them and what they would do differently.

Pupils can enjoy a short break from the intensive studying but very quickly need to get back into a regular study routine. The SQA exams start on Tuesday 1st May in 11 weeks time!

February and March are incredibly busy months in the senior phase. As well as preparing for the exams, pupils have deadlines to meet for internal coursework, projects and assignments.

One of the most important things pupils can do is be in school. Absence from school can have a significant impact on attainment. We appreciate that there are times when pupils cannot avoid being absent, either because of illness, or involvement in school activities. However, when pupils are absent they must take responsibility for catching up with work missed. This could involve talking through the work with a friend in their class, checking Google Classroom for resources and materials, attending supported study events at lunchtime and after school.



## Option timelines

S3 Option forms issued on 25th January, to be returned by 9th February

S4 Option forms issued on 8th March, to be returned by 22nd March

S5 Option forms issued on 14th February, to be returned by 23rd February

S6 Option forms issued on 22nd February, to be returned by 9th March

## Contact evening dates

S2	Thursday 1st February
S3	Tuesday 20th March
P7 Information evening	Thursday 21st June



dreamstime.com



# SPRING FAIR

**Saturday 24th March 2018**

Sorry, we know that Christmas has just passed, but we have already started planning for the Spring Fair.

The Spring Fair is now established as a key date in the school calendar. It is a wonderful opportunity for pupils, parents, staff and the whole community to come together and celebrate the life of the school.

Please put the date into your diary now!

## So what happens at the Spring Fair?

For those who have never been to the Spring Fair before, there is something for everyone!

Inflatable activities, coffee and cakes, BBQ, musical entertainment, food assembly, science demonstrations, stalls and much more ...



## Parent Helpers

The Parent Council will again be looking for helpers for the day of the Fair. The Parent Council help run the Bottle Stall, Raffle and BBQ.

If every parent committed to giving just an hour of their time over the course of the school year—we would have approximately 600 hours of parent help!

All that is required is to help at one of these stalls for an hour. Volunteer with a friend, or two! Those parents involved enjoy being part of a school event—and the craic is good!

There will be requests closer to the time, please think about it. We know that everyone is busy, even more important that we find time to organise and support these community events.

## And the amazing S2 stalls ...

As part of House Tutor time, all S2 classes are tasked with organising and running a stall at the Spring Fair.

Over the last few years we have had some amazing stalls—baking, tombola, test your reaction time, guess the calories in the cake, guess the teacher, cracker eating competitions and last year the unforgettable petting zoo!

Pupils are encouraged to be as creative as possible. Preparing for the fair helps develop important skills such as team work, co-operation, planning and organising.

# Christmas Activities

Christmas always seems to take so long to come, and then passes so quickly. However we are fortunate to have so many happy school memories from this Christmas—Christmas Fair, Christmas Concert, Socials, Christmas Jumpers ....





# S4-6 Modern Studies and History Trip to Edinburgh

On Wednesday 13th December, 22 S4-6 pupils from History & Modern Studies embarked on an overnight trip to Edinburgh to visit the National Museum of Scotland and the Scottish Parliament. Pupils were accompanied by Mrs Webster, Miss Parker and Mr Hilton.

After spending a few hours in the museum, pupils were able to head out to dinner and visit the Christmas Markets for some last minute gift shopping before attending a fantastic performance of Shrek at the Playhouse Theatre. Exhausted after a long and activity-packed day, the pupils headed for some well-earned rest at the Edinburgh Central Youth Hostel.



The next morning pupils headed to the Scottish Parliament where they were met by Highland Region MSP, Maree Todd. Along with her assistants,

pupils were given a quick tour of the Parliament and even allowed to sit in the MSPs' chairs in the Chamber! The group then headed back to the gallery to watch First Minister's Question Time in action. Afterwards, Ms Todd had arranged for the group to meet with the First Minister and Deputy First Minister. The pupils then had an opportunity to meet with their local MSPs to ask questions.

Overall, a very successful trip which was thoroughly enjoyed by all.



# PUPIL ACHIEVEMENTS

## National Youth Orchestra of Scotland

Jonathan Mackay S6 violin, was accepted in to the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland this year and Catherine Mackay S4 viola, to the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland Junior Orchestra.

They will take part in several residential courses with performances in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee.

## Scottish Football

Huge well done to Kieran Chalmers (S5) on being selected to represent Scottish Schoolboys Under-18 Team in the CENTENARY SHIELD. Prior to the tournament he will take part in squad training and practice matches before playing against -

**NORTHERN IRELAND** at Greenock Morton on 9<sup>th</sup> March,

**ENGLAND** at York on 23<sup>rd</sup> March,

**REPUBLIC OF IRELAND** in Dublin on 12<sup>th</sup> April, and finally

**WALES** at Palmerston Park, Dumfries on the 19<sup>th</sup> of April.

This follows on from Kieran representing the North of Scotland Schools Select for 3 seasons and captaining the senior side this season. Kieran has always been a fantastic servant for the school teams and has won North of Scotland Leagues and Cups while setting a fantastic example for others in the school through his skill level and attitude. We wish Kieran all the very best, he deserves the chance to shine at this level and hopefully beyond. Good luck!



## Scotland U18 Rugby Selection



Congratulations to Jake Henry (S6) who has been selected for the initial 37 man Scotland U18 squad. He will take part in training weekends and trial games in the lead up to games against Wales, France, England and Ireland in March/April. Jake will be hoping to secure a place in the match day squads which will require a huge amount of hard work. Currently Jake is a Stage 2 Scottish Rugby Academy player and trains several times a week to develop strength and conditioning, fitness and skill acquisition. We wish him all the best with future training and trial games and very much hope to see him in a Scotland U18 shirt this year.



## National Deaf Children Society National Youth Advisory Board

Congratulations to Lucy Taylor (3W2) on her recent appointment to the NDCS NYAB

There were nearly 70 applications; interviews were held in Glasgow on the 14<sup>th</sup> December, with 4 people on the panel and a sign language interpreter. This was her first real life experience of using an unfamiliar interpreter (who used a range of different signs.)

Lucy said, *'It was*

*important to ask the interpreter to explain or to use a different sign because it was my interview and I wanted to know what I was being asked.'* The panel were impressed by her confidence to ask for clarification, her responses to the questions especially the one which asked her about her proudest moment. (her cochlear implant broke whilst on holiday and she had to cope without it; this was exceptionally stressful and tiring as she had to rely on lipreading and her BSL.) And they were in agreement with her 3 words to describe herself: friendly, happy and proud!

They were delighted to offer her a place on the new Board which will last for 2 years. The first meeting of the 19 successful candidates will be in London; another new experience flying to London without her mum! Lucy will be the furthest north candidate.

The main topics the Board will discuss will be to look at improving deaf young people's experiences in education and health. All findings and recommendations will feed into the National plans and onto the national and Scottish governments.

Lucy has already been involved in the work of the national charity for Deaf young people as a Young campaigner, an active participant for the BSL Act and in school a member of the BSL choir.



Mrs Cormack, on hearing of Lucy's appointment said she was really proud of her achievement. Mrs Kinsman, PT Deaf said she was a real star!

## Judo



**Cameron Foster (S5) travelled to Walsall last weekend to compete in the Midland area open ranking judo competition.**

**In the Cadet -60kg category, after losing his first contest and dropping into the repechage, Cameron made it to the bronze medal contest after winning his next 3 contests. Losing in golden score, he finished 5th place.**

**Later on that day he competed in the Junior -60kg category, where he won 2 out of 3 contests, coming second in the pool and bringing home the silver medal.**

# Sunflower Café Opening



Wednesday 24th January marked the official opening of the Sunflower Café. The café has been designed and decorated by pupils as part of our employability programme.

We recognise the importance of pupils developing employability skills, whatever they plan to go on to in life. The café will help pupils develop skills such as team work, communication, customer service, finance and many more.

The café was decorated by pupils and so has already provided a valuable learning experience.

## Who can use the café?

As part of the school, the café cannot just be open for members of the public to drop in. However it is available as a bookable space. We hope that it will be used by teachers as a different space for learning. Teachers and some council groups are also encouraged to book it for meetings.

It is also available for community groups to book during the school day. We hope that some of these groups will be able to develop closer partnerships with the school.

If you would like to find out more, please contact the school on 01349 869860



# Watch out for the next issue of the *News...*

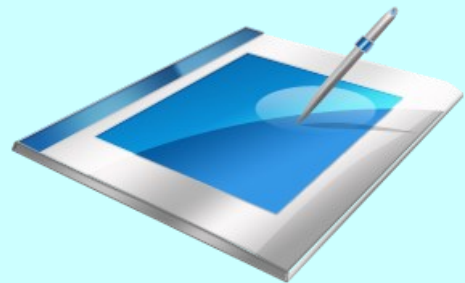
Something missing? Correction? Is there a feature you'd like to see? Get in touch!

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**Dingwall Academy**

*A school with a sense of community—a school where by taking collective responsibility, pupils and staff have the opportunity to achieve extraordinary things.*

**RESPECT**

**RESPONSIBILITY**

**HONESTY**

**DETERMINATION**