



# Dingwall Academy

# News



**JANUARY**  
**2016**

## Dates for your Diary:

- ⇒ **4<sup>th</sup> February**  
S3 into S4 Option Forms returned
- ⇒ **5<sup>th</sup> February**  
Ski Trip Departs  
Inter-House Cross Country
- ⇒ **8<sup>th</sup> February**  
Parent Council Meeting  
7pm
- ⇒ **9<sup>th</sup> February**  
S4 – S6 Immunisations
- ⇒ **10<sup>th</sup> February**  
Ross-shire School Cross  
Country Championships  
⇒ **15<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> Feb**
- Pupil Holiday  
⇒ **17<sup>th</sup> Feb**
- Staff In-Service  
⇒ **18<sup>th</sup> Feb**
- S4 Reports and option  
forms issued  
⇒ **19<sup>th</sup> Feb**
- Rock Challenge Quiz Night  
⇒ **24<sup>th</sup> Feb**
- North Schools Cross Coun-  
try Championships  
⇒ **26<sup>th</sup> Feb**
- S4 into S5 Option Forms  
returned  
⇒ **1<sup>st</sup> March**
- S3 Immunisations

Welcome to our Newsletter. As always, there are a number of achievements, pupil pieces, and events inside. Enjoy!



## Awards Abound!

Roll out the red carpet – Dingwall Academy are heading to a number of award ceremonies ...

On Monday 15<sup>th</sup> February a group of pupils and staff will travel to the Scottish Sensory Awards in Stirling. The school has been shortlisted for awards in 3 categories:

**Personnel and Workforce:** For the Dingwall Academy staff sign language class

**Engaging people with a sensory loss:** For the Interdisciplinary Deaf Studies classes

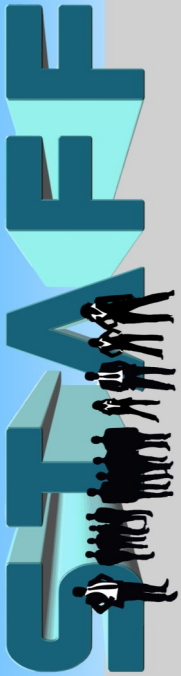
**Encouraging community connectedness:** For work producing a transition DVD

Then on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> February pupils and staff travel to Glasgow where the S2 Gaidhlig class has been shortlisted for Best Film at the Filmg awards. Adam Bradley has also been nominated for best actor.

Additionally, FOUR pupils in S2 and S3 have been shortlisted for the University of Stirling's 'Creating Gallipoli' Creative Writing Competition.

Well done to all involved for getting this far and fingers crossed for the award nights ...

# Notes & News



## Staffing

We send good wishes for a long and happy retirement to Mrs Elizabeth Munro who retired on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> January. Mrs Munro had been in Dingwall Academy for 28 years in both the English and Pupil Support Departments. Many pupils and parents will have fond memories of having Mrs Munro as a teacher.

Congratulations to Mrs Watson on the recent arrival of her new son. A reminder to parents that while Mrs Watson is on maternity leave the Fairburn caseload are being covered by Ms Tullis.

Both Mrs Lewthwaite and Mrs Arkley will start their maternity leaves in February. We will welcome Mr Trevelyan to the Social Subjects department and Miss Munro to English. Miss Munro has already worked in the English department and we are delighted to be able to welcome her back.

## Options

A reminder that the options process takes place over this term. It is important that pupils and parents take time to consider all the information available. Option forms and option booklets are all available via the school website. Individual option forms will also be issued to pupils.

## Assessment Deadlines

Prelim exams are now underway and pupils are also involved in unit assessments as well as working towards folio and investigation deadlines. It is so important that pupils meet all deadlines set by teachers. These deadlines are set by the SQA guidelines and there is no flexibility with these dates. Where pupils or parents have concerns over assessments they are advised to speak with their class teacher as soon as possible.



## Severe weather information

The severe weather information has now been issued to all parents and is also available via the school website.

# Notes & News

## Behaviour in the community

We are fortunate that the majority of our pupils are extremely well behaved both in and around the school. Unfortunately a small number choose to be disruptive and we have had some complaints from local residents about anti- social behaviour. Where members of the public report such behaviour we will not hesitate to contact the police. Anyone aware of any pupils behaving inappropriately are encouraged to report this to any member of the Senior Management Team as soon as possible.

## Road Safety

The school has received a number of phone calls from members of the public concerned about pupil safety while waiting for buses. On dark mornings it can be very difficult for drivers to see; pupils are reminded that they should stand well back from the kerb when waiting for buses.



## Spring Fair

We may still be eating the last of the Christmas chocolate and picking up pine needles but already preparations are underway for the Spring Fair that will take place this year on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> March. Please put the date in your diary and watch out for further details.

## Facebook

We continue to be delighted with the attention our Facebook page receives. Parents are reminded that our Facebook page is used to celebrate pupil successes and achievements. Communication with parents on other issues eg. school closures, holiday dates, contact evenings will continue to be via the newsletter and emails. Parents requiring to make contact with the school are advised not to leave message on the Facebook page as they may not get an immediate response.

# Charity



## The Highlands Support Refugees

The school has been working to support this Dingwall based charity. The charity are involved with collecting and then transporting donations to refugee camps in Calais and Greece. Pupils in Art designed gift cards and a number of pupils also helped with the loading of containers prior to Christmas.

The charity are now collecting food items that will then be sent to the Refugee Community Kitchen in Calais. This kitchen is currently trying to feed over 3000 people each day and are desperately struggling for more food. Many of the children in these camps are secondary school age and it would be wonderful if each pupil could bring in one item to help support them.

Pupils are being asked to donate the following food items:

**Tinned chopped tomatoes**

**Tinned kidney beans**

**Tinned chickpeas**

**Bags of sugar**

**Bags of lentils**

Pupils can bring any of these food items in to the front of the school on **Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup>, Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> and Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February**. All donations will be collected by the charity at the end of the day on the Friday.

## Craft Corner



At the start of the term, it was decided to set up a craft group for staff, which would meet on Tuesday lunchtimes to share ideas and projects. As a group, each member knitted or crocheted at least one square, with the intention of making as blanket for charity.

We were very pleased to have made 4 blankets altogether which we will be donating to Fodderty House.

# PE Kit—A Reminder!

## A message from the PE Department:

Over the past few months the PE department have received a large number of notes and phone calls from parents to inform us of medical issues with pupils. This is undoubtedly good practice from parents as it allows PE teachers to gauge what activities and movements that pupils should avoid during lessons. However, a large percentage of pupils who are handing in notes are failing to take their PE kit and are therefore not following department rules. Pupils are essentially missing out on large parts of the PE curriculum by not coming to school ready and prepared to take some part in the lesson.

It is incredibly important that pupils always have their PE kit with them for every lesson despite any medical issues. If pupils are well enough to attend school there is generally always some kind of physical activity that PE teachers can adapt for pupils to do during lessons. If physical activity is not deemed appropriate by the teacher then pupils will be asked to carry out some kind of role within the class that will also require them to have their PE kit. We do appreciate that there are some medical issues that would make changing for PE inappropriate; however, these are very rare.

The school is trying hard to embed good exercise habits in all pupils, hence our commitment to giving all pupils from S1-S6 at least two periods of Core PE week. We would very much appreciate parental support in ensuring that if a medical note or phone call is required for your child that you ensure they have their PE kit with them at all times.

Yours Sportingly  
Mr M Dillon  
Faculty Head  
Health and Nutrition

Please see the next page for the PE department guidelines on PE Kit and some basic rules.





# PE Kit Guide

Please see below for the PE department guidelines on PE Kit and some basic rules:

What does PE Kit consist of?

## Inside or Outside

A change of trainers or footwear depending on activity – *this is a very important to protect PE facility floors and to avoid feet being sweaty for long periods after PE!!*

A change of T-shirt – *This must be different from the T-shirt or Polo top they wear to school.*

Shorts or a pair of tracksuit bottoms - *Shorts are preferable as legs tend to get very sweaty under tracksuit bottoms during PE.*

A change of socks

If pupils are outside for PE then they should take appropriate warm clothes such as a hoody or sweatshirt – *We use outside facilities the whole year round and will go outside in cold weather and rain.*

Girls and boys with long hair must tie it back - *They will be given hairbands or elastic bands if they forget!*



## Swimming

An appropriate swimming costume for girls and swimming shorts/speedos for boys – *Bikini sets are not acceptable swimming costumes for girls during PE.*

A towel for drying afterwards.

Swimming goggles are advised if pupils own a pair.

If pupils cannot swim due to medical reasons parents should phone the PE department to discuss this after than sending a note to excuse their child from the whole block.

If pupils cannot swim – we will teach them how!

## Basic PE Kit Rules

If pupils have a medical issue then they must bring their PE kit with at all times.

Pupils must be changed and in their correct facility within 7 minutes of the bell.

If pupils have a medical note they must get changed and report to their PE teacher in the PE office ASAP - *It is preferable if pupils can do this before their PE period e.g. at morning interval or lunchtime.*

If pupils have a note for swimming for whatever reason they must have alternative dry side PE kit with them.

Valuables must be placed in the PE teacher's box at the start of every lesson – *this includes phones, wallets/purses, watches etc. These will be locked securely in the office during lessons. We cannot guarantee the security of any valuables that pupils leave in changing rooms*

Girls and boys with long hair must tie it back - *They will be given hairbands or elastic bands if they forget!*

# Literacy and English

## BGE Literacy Initiative

Over the last 3 months pupils have been taking part in a literacy initiative. The following pupils helped with this and were rewarded with certificates and literacy ambassador badges!

Sara Nicol S3

Rachael Johnstone S2

John Anderson S2

Brooke MacKay S1



Sara and Brooke



Rachael and John

## Supporting Adult Literacies Learning

Professional Development Awards (PDAs) are awarded through the Scottish Qualifications Authority.



The PDA in Supporting Adult Literacies Learning is intended for individuals who wish to assist with tutoring adults in numeracy and literacy. Dingwall Academy are planning to pilot this course with S6 pupils next session; pupils will then be able to work with both pupil and adult learners. HighLife Highland Adult Learning are always looking to recruit and train more volunteer tutors. If any parent would be interested in finding out more about this course with a view to becoming a

tutor they should contact either the school or Iona Finlayson, Adult Learning

Coordinator [Iona.Finlayson@highlifehighland.com](mailto:Iona.Finlayson@highlifehighland.com)

# Interdistrict Cross Country

Following their performances in the North XC league and championships, Kirsty Arnaud, Tara Larsen - S1, Rachel Johnstone -S2 Kieran Chalmers -S3 were selected to represent the North of Scotland at the Interdistrict XC in Edinburgh. In the U13 girls race Kirsty came 30th, Rachel 32nd & Tara 37th. Kieran was placed 10th in the U15 boys race and Danny McPake came 14<sup>th</sup> in the U13 boys race. Both North teams won bronze medals. A great

## Film G

Meall an naidheachd air clas Gàidhlig AS2 leis an naidheachd gu bheil am film a rinn iad airson farpais FILMG air a' gheàrr-liosta airson film as fheàrr na bliadhna. Gheibh iad a-mach am faigh iad am prìomh dhuais aig oidhche shònraichte shìos ann an Glaschu sa Ghearran. 'S math a rinn Àdhamh Bradley cuideachd agus e air a' gheàrr-liosta airson cleasaiche na bliadhna.



Congratulations to the S2 Gàidhlig class whose short film has been nominated in the best film category in this year's FILMG competition. Well done too to Adam Bradley who has won a nomination for best actor. They will find out if they have won at a special awards ceremony in Glasgow in February. You can watch their film "A' Chlach 's a' Chraobh Chliùteach" as well as other entries from schools around Scotland on the FILMG website .  
<http://filmg.co.uk/en/films/filmg2016/winners-shortlists/youth/>





## Battle for BSL

<http://www.bslzone.co.uk/watch/battle-bsl/>

**The Battle for BSL** looks at how BSL was first identified and how the language's status has developed since. Among other key events, it includes the BSL marches that led to BSL recognition in 2003, and the landmark BSL (Scotland) Bill which was passed in 2015. Dingwall Academy's contribution and commitment to BSL is mentioned in the programme.

It is presented by **Clark Denmark** and features prominent Deaf people such as **Lilian Lawson** and **Gerry Hughes**. The programme is delivered in BSL with subtitles. (Clark was one of Mrs Kinsman's first BSL tutors!)

Lilian Lawson visited the school last year as part of the Scottish Deaf History project and was impressed by the interest and questions asked by the pupils.

A fascinating programme- well worth watching.

## Scottish Sensory Awards

Towards the end of term, the school received notification of the new Scottish Sensory awards derived from the recently published See Hear Strategy and was invited to submit entries under any of the 7 categories.

Over 60 nominations were received in relation to work with Deaf BSL users, deafblind, deafened, hard of hearing and visually impaired people reflecting a huge range of good and innovative work across Scotland.

It was wonderful news to learn that Dingwall Academy has **been shortlisted for 3 awards** in the categories: Personal and Workforce, Engaging people with a sensory loss and Encouraging community connectedness.



## Cadet Success

Congratulations to Murrion MacKinnon S4. Murrion is a member of the Inverness Sea Cadets and recently achieved awards for the Sea Cadet Swimming Test and the Bronze ASA Swimming Challenge.

# Strathpuffer 2016

Rain, mud, darkness, no sleep: That must mean that it's time for the annual Strathpuffer 24 hour mountain bike race in Torachilty Forest, Contin.



Dingwall Academy had two interests in the race, with 10 pupils racing in the team of ten category and Fin Graham racing in the Solo category.



After last year's success, pupils were keen to defend their win in the team of 10 category. Competition for places on the team was high, with 10 riders battling for the last three spots.

The final team consisted of: Angus Macdonald, Paul Langdale, Leon Radin, Hamish Kerr, Tam Munro-White, Callum MacKinnon, Craig Bissett, Rory Graham, Alasdair Reid and Sean Fillos-Kelt

Tam Munro-White gave the team the best possible start when he was the first rider to appear back at transition after the first lap – a massive achievement in a field of over 800 riders. He also won the award for the fastest lap of the race. Well done Tam.

After this solid start, over the first few laps the lead slowly grew. However, conditions were some of the worst seen in the history of the race with thick mud developing in parts of the course and this began to take its toll on the bikes. One particular instance saw Alasdair Reid running into the transition with a puncture, having already used his spare tube out on course repairing a first puncture. The resilience of the pupils was amazing.

Mechanical damage like this allowed the second placed team - Fortrose – to close the gap and eventually get ahead. The lead then swapped backwards and forwards between the two, a number of times, as the race progressed. Eventually, Fortrose prevailed and came out on top with our pupils coming a well-deserved second after beating 6 adult teams.



# Achievements



We were assisted once again by Colin Morrison in the pits along with S4 pupil Blair Cowan. I've lost count of how many bikes Blair washed throughout the night but it was a huge help along with checking brakes and gears, fixing or replacing broken parts. It was a brilliant team effort with parents and teachers supporting us throughout the day and night. Huge thanks to all.

Onto the Solo competition where Fin Graham set off to tackle the whole 24 hours on his own, lap after lap. He had a fantastic support crew with his mum supplying food and fluids each lap and Mark Goodwill from OrangeFox Bikes keeping his bike working. He rode almost 150 miles off road, 70% of which was in the dark and with 6000m of vertical ascent. His determination paid off and he came 14<sup>th</sup> out of 104 soloists, and more importantly beat the Legend that is Guy Martin ;-)  
This immense effort earned him the "Doug Stewart Award for Youth Performance", which was a total surprise to Fin but once he had woken up when he heard his name, he was delighted to receive it!



What made this year extra special was the amount of support shown to the pupils by local businesses; Frank Nicol supplied a fantastic Hyundai generator for lighting in the pits and charging bike lights through the night. Fuel for it was provided by the West End Garage. Cockburn's Butcher provided a mountain of bacon and their prize winning Haggis which lifted spirits in the wee small hours. Tesco Community Champion, Ruth Foster (former pupil), could not have been more helpful in providing energy drinks, gels, mars bars and a host of other groceries to see the team through the 24 Hours. Finally, bike light company Magicshine provided the team with 2 powerful lights to make sure that all riders were well equipped to tackle the darkness.



And finally, a thought for Strathpuffer 2017.....a GIRL'S team?!



# In the next issue of the *News...*

- Pupil Voices
- Pupil Achievements
- Spring Fair Updates

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

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## A Strange Wild Song

By Lewis Carroll

He thought he saw an Elephant  
That practiced on a fife:  
He looked again, and found it was  
A letter from his wife.  
"At length I realize," he said,  
"The bitterness of life!"

He thought he saw a Buffalo  
Upon the chimney-piece:  
He looked again, and found it was  
His Sister's Husband's Niece.  
"Unless you leave this house," he said,  
"I'll send for the police!"

he thought he saw a Rattlesnake  
That questioned him in Greek:  
He looked again, and found it was  
The Middle of Next Week.  
"The one thing I regret," he said,  
"Is that it cannot speak!"

He thought he saw a Banker's Clerk  
Descending from the bus:  
He looked again, and found it was  
A Hippopotamus.  
"If this should stay to dine," he said,  
"There won't be much for us!"

He thought he saw a Kangaroo  
That worked a Coffee-mill:  
He looked again, and found it was  
A Vegetable-Pill.  
"Were I to swallow this," he said,  
"I should be very ill!"

He thought he saw a Coach-and-Four  
That stood beside his bed:  
He looked again, and found it was  
A Bear without a Head.  
"Poor thing," he said, "poor silly thing!  
It's waiting to be fed!"

<http://www.public-domain-poetry.com/lewis-carroll/strange-wild-song-1318>



## 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**