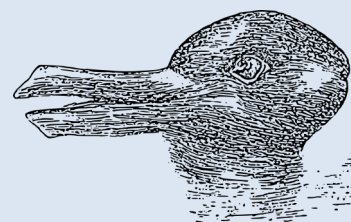




Dingwall Academy

News

JANUARY 2017



Dates for your Diary:

Thursday 2nd February - S3
Contact Evening

Monday 20th and Tuesday 21st
February—school closed

Wednesday 22nd February—
In-service day, school closed to
pupils.

Friday 3rd March—Premiership
Football Trip departs until 5th
March.

Thursday 9th March—S3
Science at Work day.

Tuesday 21st March—S2
Contact Evening.

Saturday 25th March—Spring
Fair

Tuesday 4th April - Rock
Challenge Event—Eden Court

Wednesday 5th April—School
closes for Easter.

Monday 24th April—School
opens after Easter.



Strathpuffer 2017

Dingwall Academy Mountain Bike Club achieved a place on the Strathpuffer24 podium for the third successive year.

It is a fantastic achievement in what was a record year for the “Puffer”. Almost 900 riders competed in the event riding a total of 6583 laps, that’s 72413 km, or nearly twice around the world. Our awesome pupils were right in the thick of it, completing 28 laps and coming second in the schools category. One of our riders - Rory Graham – achieved the fourth fastest lap of those 6583, just 8 seconds behind the actual fastest lap.

More inside– pages 4 & 5

Notes & News

Change to In-Service closure dates:

The original school calendar for 2016—2017 included an in-service day on **Monday 5th June**. This in-service day has now been changed to **Thursday 4th May**. This change has been made across all Highland schools to coincide with the local elections being held on this date. There are SQA exams scheduled for 4th May and these will still take place in school.



Pupil Immunisation Dates:

S1 girls—HPV injections have been rescheduled for Tuesday 7th February

S3 pupils—DTP/MENACWY (Tetanus, diphtheria & Polio and Meningitis) vaccinations are on Thursday 9th February



Study Leave Dates 2017



Study Leave will be granted to all senior phase pupils who are sitting at least one exam at National 5 level and above.

Study leave will start on Tuesday 2nd May and pupils will return on Friday 2nd June.

Further information will be issued to all pupils involved with SQA exams.

Option Timeline:

S2. S3 Option forms issued on 9th March, to be returned by 23rd March

S3. S4 Option forms issued on 25th January, to be returned by 10th February

S4. S5 Option forms issued on 16th February, to be returned by 3rd March

S5. S6 Option forms issued on 2nd March, to be returned by 10th March

Notes & News



Staff Update

We welcome back Mrs Arkley, Mrs Lewthwaite and Mrs Watson from their maternity leave. Unfortunately Mrs Merrell will be absent from school for some considerable time and so Guidance caseloads are as follows:

Brahan	Miss M Alexander
Novar	Miss S Tullis
Tulloch	Mrs K Watson
Wyvis	Mrs V MacLennan

Cross Country



The Cross Country season is now upon us and competition dates are as follows:

2nd February — Inter-house Competition

8th February — Ross-Shire Schools Cross Country

1st March — North of Scotland Schools Cross Country



Autism Awareness Course

We are very proud to say that from December 2016 onwards, every second year pupil to pass through our school will have completed a month long course in understanding autism and neurodiversity as part of our dedication to responsible citizenship for the benefit of all. A representative of Autistic Rights Group Highland and a science teacher with autism from another school gave incredibly insightful assembly talks on what autism is like for them and this was followed up by a series for lessons in house tutor groups based on lesson plans produced by the National Autistic Society. Feedback collected from pupils told us that they found the course really interesting, helpful and fun and we will continue to evolve and improve the course year on year.

"It was really useful to listen to Alan, someone who is autistic, and to understand what it's like living with autism."

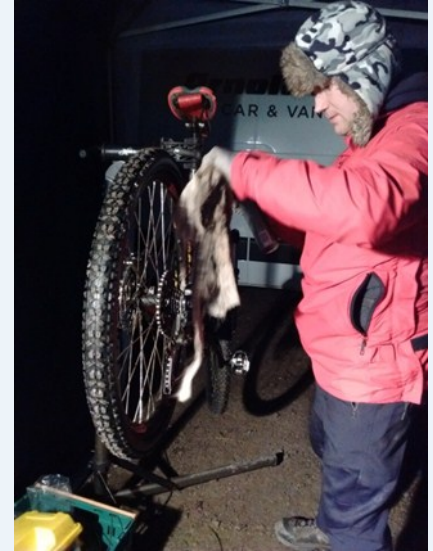
"I liked the part in Assembly when she was talking about the fact she sometimes can't recognise her kids, this made me understand that autistic people would struggle in crowds because they don't always know what's going on."



Strathpuffer 2017



Continued from front page.....



Despite the dry conditions, cold temperatures, frozen gear cables and large parts of the course being covered with ice, riders all enjoyed an amazing event. Three times race winner Keith Forsyth said that it was “technically the hardest Puffer” that he had done because of the slippery, unpredictable conditions.

The team of 8 riders was; Rowan Masterson, Eilidh Johnson, Callum Beaton, Rory Graham, Sean Kelt, Alasdair Reid, Quinn Simpson and Alexander Taylor. They were ably assisted by Blair Cowan in the pits. There was a great sense of community with parents coming and going throughout the event to help, support, feed riders and pit crew alike.



Strathpuffer 2017



Pupils snatched sleep when possible and ate whatever was put in front of them. Being woken at 3am and expected to get up and ride certainly challenged, but didn't break them. Every single pupil rose to the challenge and worked fabulously to solve problems throughout the race, both on and off the bike. We are very proud of the whole team.

Special thanks must go to Frank Nicol Farm and Garden Machinery for giving us a generator for the weekend which kept the lights on for 17 hours of darkness. Also to George Cockburn and Son for enough bacon and world class haggis to keep everyone fed for 24 hours. To Tesco Dingwall for providing rolls for the bacon and tea, coffee, hot chocolate, bananas, mars bars and porridge—all of which helped the riders in their amazing achievement.

Well done to Fortrose Academy on the win, but our motley crew will be back next year ...



Photo: Gary Williamson Photography

We have recently reformed our Pupil Voice. At the recent Highland Youth Voice elections we were very impressed with the quality and commitment of the candidates. Unfortunately only 3 pupils could go forward to the HYV Parliament, so those pupils who submitted manifestos and stood for election have now been invited to serve as the Pupil Voice.

This group will make sure that pupil views are represented and taken into account. The group have already been asked to consider the following issues:

- Pupil absences
- Litter around the school
- Equality and diversity in the school

The group have created their own Facebook Page and will be thinking of different ways of engaging with the whole pupil population.

The Pupil Voice are:

Lily Fraser
Ceilidh Gunn
Fergus Hallwood
Jennifer MacIver
Kyle MacKenzie
Rhuie MacKenzie
Ashleigh Stirling
Rowan Todd



DINGWALL COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Eilidh Gunn and Kaylea Syrjanen both serve on the Dingwall Community Council representing the views of youngsters in the Dingwall area.

Spectroscopy in a Suitcase!

Advanced Higher and Higher pupils from Dingwall Academy were joined by pupils from Fortrose Academy on Friday 20th January. The object was to learn and apply new skills using Spectroscopy.

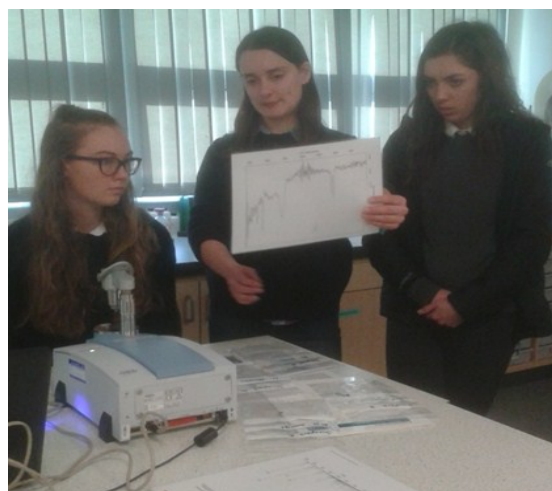
Edinburgh University, with funding from the Royal Society of Chemistry, visited Dingwall and brought visible light, infra-red and proton nuclear magnetic resonance spectrometers .

We were able to learn how to use these machines and to practise using them to solve chemical problems. Over the morning we wrestled with the ideas of how the machines work and how they can be used to find out detailed information on chemical identification and analysis.

Some of the brain work was a little stressful but Ariana and Hannah, Ph.D students from Edinburgh University were very friendly and helped us a lot.

Although we learn about this type of analysis in Advanced Higher these machines are not available to us in school and we don't have a University Chemistry Department close at hand. It was really good that the University and the RSC have recognised the distance difficulties which we have and we really appreciate their help.

We were the last school to be visited in this Highland tour of 'SIAS' and we found out that our 20 pupils who took part made a far bigger clientele than the other three schools visited. Sadly the early Friday finish meant a slightly shorter session but that might have been better for our weary brains!



Naidheachdan Gàidhlig / Gaelic News



Well done to Eilidh Sutherland, Kirsty Campbell, Rory Cormack and Mairead Morgan who very professionally contributed readings as part of the BBC Alba Christmas service which was broadcast on Christmas Eve. Eilidh Johnson in S4 also got the opportunity to work with the production team. Here she is cataloguing shots with the sound recordist. Here is Eilidh's account of her experience:

Latha aig BBC ALBA

'S mi bha air mo dhòigh nuair a fhuair mi cothrom obair fhaighinn aig a' BhBC airson an

latha. Bha sinn a' fiolmadh ann an eaglais ann an Inbhir Ghordain bho mheadhan latha gu meadhan oidhche agus 's e latha gun stad a bh'ann. Rinn mise torr obrach còmhla ris an sgioba fuaim agus bha sin sgoinneil ach cuideachd bha mi a' dèanamh torr diofar rudan an siud 's an seo airson an sgioba air fad. Fhuair mi cothrom clàradh a dhèanamh agus dh'ionnsaich mi torr mu dheidhinn clàradh ro-laimhe agus cuin a bhios na h-irean fuaim ag èirigh agus a' tuiteam air a' bhòrd gus fuaim fhaighinn ceart. Chòrd seo rium gu mòr agus tha mi an dòchas gu bheil torr chothroman eile mar seo gu bhith agam a-rithist

Eilidh Niclain S4

*I was delighted to get the chance to work with the BBC for the day. We were filming in a church in Invergordon from midday to midnight. I worked a lot with the sound team and it was excellent but I also worked as a runner doing a bit of this and that. I got the chance to record and I learned a lot about sound recording and how to make sure everything is at the right level. I enjoyed the experience and I hope to get other opportunities like this in the future. **Eilidh Johnson S4***

Film G

*Meal an naidheachd air AS2 (**Blythe Wilson, Abigail Williams, Mairead Flynn, Lucie Corbett, Carrie MacKinnon, Bronwyn Gwyther, Lauren Morrison**) a shoirbhich leotha am film a chruthaich iad airson FILMG am-bliadhna fhaighinn air a' gheàrr-liosta airson am film sa bheil a' Ghàidhlig as fheàrr.*

Well done S2 Gàidhlig (**Blythe Wilson, Abigail Williams, Mairead Flynn, Lucie Corbett, Carrie MacKinnon, Bronwyn Gwyther, Lauren Morrison**) for the film they produced as part of FILMG, getting through to the shortlist for the Best Gaelic award at this year's awards ceremony. This is the third year in a row that our Gàidhlig pupils have won through to the final stages of the competition. Here is a scene from the film Geamannan Gàidhlig (Gaelic Games)

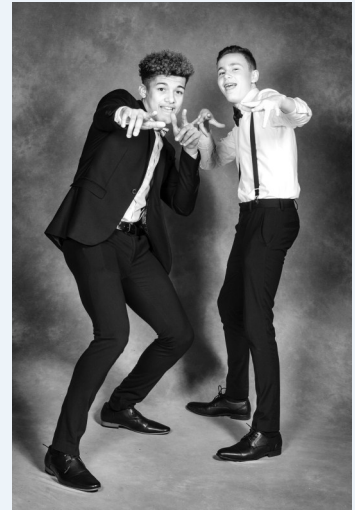


End of Term Fun



Christmas may already seem a distant memory, but thank you to everyone who helped make the lead up to Christmas so enjoyable.

Three socials took place with over 600 pupils enjoying live music, good food and amazing dancing.



End of Term Fun



On the last day, S1 and S2 pupils took part in festive assemblies and enjoyed contributions from the Ceilidh Band and Advanced Higher English pupils. Pupils were also enthusiastic participants in some community singing!

A new initiative this year was the delivery of candy canes. Pupils were able to send candy canes to staff and pupils to say thank you, or just as a random act of kindness.

S1 and S2 pupils took part in a festive football match, although Mr Learmont was perhaps the most eager player on the pitch!



Pupils and staff also took the opportunity to wear festive jumpers to school on the last day, and as a result of all these fundraising activities we were able to send another cheque for £800 to Teenage Cancer Trust.

Thanks also to the Parent Council who organised bacon rolls for both staff and pupils on the last day of term. These were very well received and may become an annual tradition!

Lunchtime



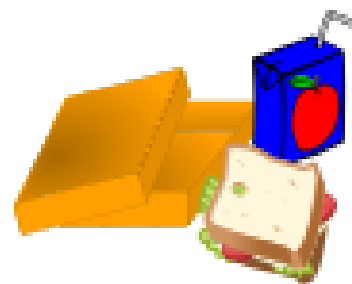
S1 pupils are now able to go down the street for their lunch one lunchtime each week. Should pupils prove themselves to be responsible then this will be extended.

Pupils are spending time in House Tutor looking at how they can make sensible choices when choosing where and what to have for lunch.

Pupils are asked to always consider the following if they choose to go down the street:

- Am I making a healthy choice? Is there something I could change to make my lunch healthier eg. water rather than fizzy juice, a filled roll rather than a sausage roll. Are chips and gravy a meal?!
- Do I need to use a plastic bag, and if so do I dispose of it responsibly?
- Do I make sure that all my rubbish is placed in a bin?

We have, unfortunately, had incidents reported where pupils have thrown food onto the road to attract seagulls. This is extremely dangerous, and if pupils are found doing this it will be treated very seriously.



If you have a pupil in S1, please take time to talk this through with them.

Lunchtime Activities

In response to pupil feedback, the PE Department together with Active Schools, have organised a number of lunchtime activities.

Sign up sheets and further information available outside the PE Department.

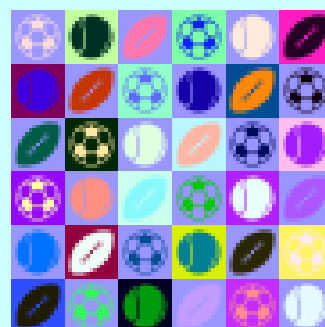
Monday S1—S3 Indoor Football

Tuesday S1—S6 Table Tennis

Wednesday S1—S6 Social Dancing

Thursday S1—S3 Dodgeball

Friday S1—S3 Indoor Hockey





Bike Maintenance Course Award

Congratulations to these pupils on completing the National 3 Cycle Maintenance Course over the past few weeks. Big thanks to Velocity Café & Bike Workshop in Inverness for helping the boys gain this award. The boys are pictured with the restored bikes and have been allowed to keep them for their own use.

Pictured from left to right are: Zak Parish, Rory Smith, Patryk Ziombki and Louis Rae.

Science at Work

Later this session S3 pupils will be taking part in Science at Work.

The event aims to inspire students to appreciate the relevance of science and its importance in society. They will also be encouraged to consider a future career in the chemical, biological or physical sciences. The day also aims to develop in pupils a natural curiosity of how science works and how the skills developed can be used to prepare them for future jobs.

Pupils will take part in a selection of workshops and visits during the course of the day. We have been able to organise this event with welcome funding from the Royal Society of Chemistry and a variety of local businesses, many are giving valuable support on the day by providing workshops and site visits.

If you would like any further information please get in touch with the Science Department.



Blood Donors

Congratulations to all senior pupils who donated blood for the first time at the recent session in Dingwall. We have a proud reputation of supporting these sessions and the staff are always delighted to see so many of our youngsters there.



Wanted: Volunteers for a Local Dig at 'Adam's Croft'

Are you interested in the past? Want to participate on a dig?

At the Heights of Docharty between Dingwall and Strathpeffer there is a number of unusual fan-shaped dykes. They may be the remains of a prehistoric system dating thousands of years or they may be more recent. There is only one way to find out: get some material which can be dated. The project, organised by the Young Archaeologists Club and funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, will allow Young Archaeologist Club (YAC) members to investigate what is known about the prehistoric landscape in the area, learn about dating techniques, and then have two weekends excavating trenches across the dykes in May, led by a professional archaeologist. We are hoping to gain information about how the dykes were built, get samples for carbon-14 dating and environmental analysis which will shed light on the date of the dykes and what the landscape was like. And have fun!

For insurance reasons, anyone participating on the dig must be a member of the Young Archaeologists' Club – but membership is free.

About YAC

YAC is a UK-wide organisation with local branches, open to anyone 8-15 years old. The Inverness branch meets once a month, usually on Saturday afternoons, either in Inverness Museum in the winter or we go to museums and sites. Cost is £3 per session. Other activities planned for the year include fieldwalking in March (checking a recently ploughed field for objects), sessions on facial recognition, and recording the old Kirk of Kiltearn in Evanton.

If you want to find out more, or get membership forms, contact volunteer leader Susan Kruse on 01997 421171 or email invernessyac@gmail.com. Further details about the YAC UK organisation is on www.yac-uk.org. *Inverness YAC is currently setting up its own website – you can help us with that too.*



S1 Sparkles



S1 Pupils were given the opportunity to create some festive sparkle in Art during the lead up to Christmas. Unfortunately we were unable to hold the final parade on the last day of term and so pupils were able to enjoy some belated Christmas celebrations during lunchtime last week.

There were some incredible creations—Mr Di Carlo even tried on a sparkly tiara!



S3 pupils have been given the opportunity to go camping on the Alladale Wilderness Reserve from Monday 8th May to Friday 12th May. The trip involves wild camping for four nights, gorge & hill walking and conservation & ecology activities. The cost of this trip is just £110 and there are 36 places available.

Please see Miss Tullis if interested in going on this trip.



Alladale 2017

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

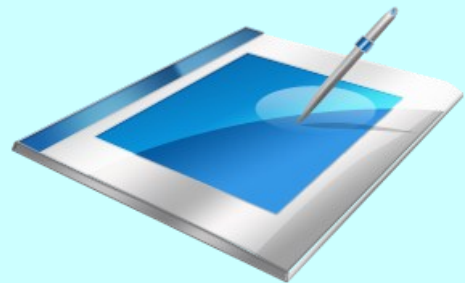
Something missing? Correction? Is there a feature you'd like to see? Get in touch!

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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