



# Dingwall Academy *News*

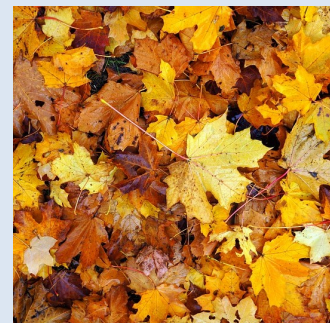


## CHRISTMAS FAIR

Our Christmas Fair takes place in the school on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> December from 6 – 9pm. We have over 120 stalls selling a great variety of local products. There will also be teas, coffees, BBQ and musical entertainment. There are a number of school stalls, where groups will be raising funds for their particular activities.

Parking at the school will be limited and so we would encourage people, where possible, to walk or park in the town. The Dingwall Christmas lights are being switched on that evening at 5pm, so this would be an ideal opportunity to see the lights and then get into the festive spirit with some Christmas shopping at the Fair!

We look forward to welcoming as many people as possible, and would like to thank the Parent Council for their work in organising the event.



## NOVEMBER 2017

Friday 1st December —  
Christmas Fair

Thursday 7th December—  
S1 Contact Evening

Tuesday 12th December—  
Christmas Concert 7pm

Wed 13th and Thurs 14th  
December—Senior Phase  
Parliament Trip

Tues 19th December -  
Lower School Social

Wed 20th December -  
Middle School Social

Thurs 21st December -  
Upper School Social

# Notes & News

## Staff News

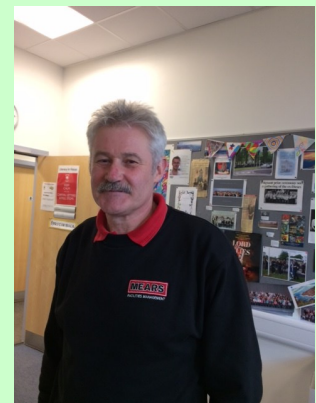


At the end of this term we say a fond farewell to Mr Gaffney as he starts his retirement. Mr Gaffney has been a member of staff at Dingwall Academy for over 22 Years. He has worked as a Principal Teacher of Guidance, and latterly as Depute Head Teacher with responsibility for Pupil Support. Mr Gaffney has helped shape the lives of so many pupils and he will be missed by pupils, parents and staff.

Mr Gaffney's replacement, Ms J Kerr, joins us in January. Ms Kerr is currently Principal Teacher of Learning Support at Millburn Academy and we look forward to welcoming her to Dingwall Academy.

Mr Fulton, CDT Technician, started his retirement at the end of last month. Mr Fulton has been very involved with the life of the school. He not only helped out in both the CDT and Art Departments, but was always a willing helper with scenery and sets for school productions plus all other manner of requests. We wish him all the very best for a healthy and happy retirement.

And taking up the post of CDT technician is a face familiar to many - James MacKenzie (aka James the Jannie!) James has been working in the school as part of the Mears Facilities Management team, but will take up his new role as CDT Technician before Christmas. Congratulations to James on this appointment.



# Notes & News

## Safety and Bus Bays

It has been brought to our attention that a number of cars are coming into school via the ring road and not the Sports Centre. The only vehicles allowed to access the school via the ring road are school buses.

We have witnessed a number of dangerous incidents where drivers have chosen to ignore the one way system in place. Your co-operation with this would be greatly appreciated.



## School Photographer

The date for the S6 and Prefect group photographs has now been changed to Friday 8th December. Prefect and S6 photographs will be taken during morning interval.

## Prelim Examinations

All S4, S5 and S6 Pupils will be issued with prelim timetables on Thursday 30th November. The timetable will also be available on the school website.

Prelim exams run from Monday 15th January until Friday 2nd February.

During the prelims pupils do not receive study leave. Pupils are expected to attend normal classes when they are not timetabled for an exam.



# DINGWALL LIBRARY

## Volunteering

We'd like to take this chance to say thank you to three Dingwall Academy pupils who have been taking part in High Life Highland's *High Voltage* volunteering program, through which they have helped run several clubs and activities both after school and during the holidays. Our hardworking volunteers are Heather Christie S1, George Shread S2 and Emily Clark S4 – thank you all very much, your help is greatly appreciated! Some of our volunteers recently took part in the High Voltage volunteering event at the Averon Leisure Centre and Library in Alness which provided a chance for the volunteers to meet up and to celebrate their involvement in the library initiative.

High Voltage offers a range of exciting volunteering opportunities in libraries for young people aged 11-25. As well as being great fun, volunteering will help you develop confidence and give you valuable skills for your education and future employment. You can help with a wide range of activities including:

- Technobots
- Code Club
- Lego Clubs
- Bookbug



Please ask in the library or email [libraries@highlifehighland.com](mailto:libraries@highlifehighland.com) for more information.

## Book Group

The Teen Book Group will be starting up again after the Christmas Holidays and we're looking for new members! At our meetings we'll be talking all things book-related whilst munching on FREE biscuits, plus choosing a different book each month for the group to read and discuss. If anybody is interested in joining, please come to the library to sign up.

## Book Week Scotland

We have a couple of events coming up to celebrate Book Week Scotland (27<sup>th</sup> November – 3<sup>rd</sup> December). During the week itself we will be having a mammoth book sale in the library – make sure to pop along to grab yourself a bargain! We are also running an anagram challenge in which you have the chance to win a free DVD rental! The entry forms are available now from the main library desk.



# SUNFLOWER CAFÉ UPDATE



## Nearly ready for opening!

The paint is dry and the wallpaper up, ready for the all important finishing touches. Thanks to the hard work of pupils and staff we are on target to open our Café in January.

We are very grateful for the ongoing support of Mears and the Inverness Chamber of Commerce.

Our new café will provide a valuable learning space that can be enjoyed by our whole school community.

The work of the café will be overseen by adult staff; however pupils will be involved with the day to day running and staffing of the café. We are currently recruiting pupils for bakers, serving staff, cleaners and Barista!



## Who can use the café?

Initially the café will only be available as a bookable space.

Bookings can be made by school staff, Highlife Highland Staff and Skills Development Scotland Staff.

As things develop we may be able to open the space up to other groups.

The main purpose of the café is to provide an opportunity for pupils to gain valuable employability experience.

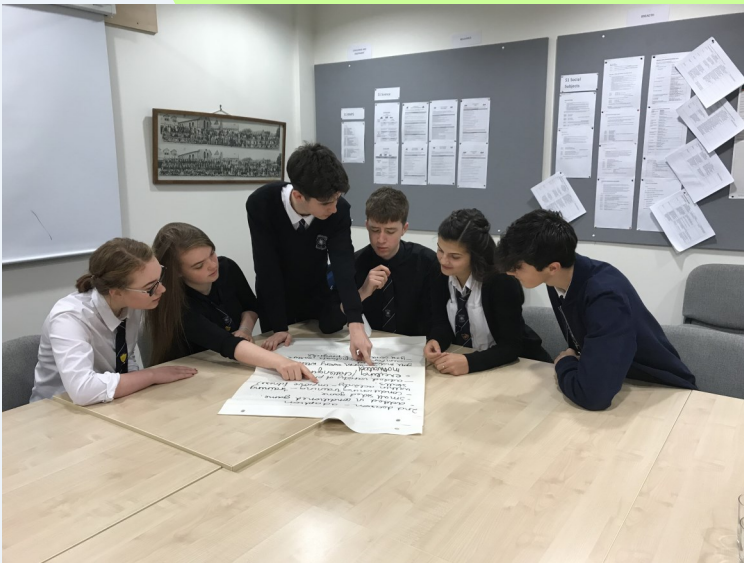


# Captains' message

Hello! This is just a short message to allow us to introduce ourselves. For this school year of 2017/18, we will be your School Captains – an important point of contact between pupils and staff. We want to put a name and a personality to our faces so you feel comfortable in approaching us. It's important to remember that anything that you think is an issue, we do too. What matters to you, matters to us.



L-R Caitlin Dolan, Calum Seaton, Drew Moody, Cameron Brown, Lara Vance, Kyle Mackenzie





# Fundraising



The school is very proud of its work with the Teenage Cancer Trust. We even hold the title of the **top fundraising school in Britain!**

The current S6 are maintaining this tradition and have a number of fundraising activities organised for throughout the session. Last Friday they organised a bake sale, always popular with pupils and staff. At the end of term they will be organising the sale and distribution of Candy Canes, and our Christmas Jumper day on the last day of term will also raise funds for the charity.

The group are also planning a 'Strictly Dingwall' Dancing competition for early next year. The staff and pupil pairings have already been made!

It is extremely important that alongside the fundraising there is a programme for awareness raising. Teenage Cancer Trust have workers that visit schools to present these incredibly important sessions, these are being arranged for certain year groups for later in the session.

In the meantime, if you would like to read more about the charity please visit:

<https://www.teenagecancertrust.org/>



# GOOGLE CLASSROOM

## Opportunities on Google Classroom

Parents are invited to join the S4, S5 or S6 Opportunities classroom which has been set up to highlight any career opportunities to students. Information about apprenticeships, job vacancies, college courses, work experience and careers will be advertised in this way. If you would like access to this site please contact the school office who can arrange for your contact details to be added to the relevant classroom.

## Chrome Book information evenings:

Over 400 parents attended the Chrome Book information evenings held this month. All parents will now be aware that all Highland Secondary School pupils are to be issued with a Chrome Book over the next 2 years. Primary 6 and Primary 7 pupils will also receive devices.

We expect to take delivery of our devices at the start of December, and will then confirm when they will be issued to pupils. There is no parental contribution Required; parents and pupils will be asked to sign an agreement that states they will take responsibility for the device. This will include keeping the device safe and charging it at home each evening.



S1 and S2 parents should now be receiving a weekly summary that highlights some of the learning taking place in school. This summary is provided to help promote discussion at home about the learning that is taking place in school. It is not intended as a homework reminder, pupils are still responsible for recording homework details and making sure that it is completed on time.

Hopefully it will help with those times when you ask pupils what they did at school and the reply is...nothing!



Google Classroom™



# British Sign Language

## SQA QUALIFICATION OFFICER VISIT

As part of the action plan within the BSL (Scotland Act), the school welcomed Ms Ella Leith, the SQA Qualification development officer (BSL) to see how BSL is delivered in the school from S1 through to Senior Phase.

She met with a focus group, they were honest, reflective and engaging throughout the time with her. She remarked that their interest and commitment to BSL was impressive.

She joined the S2 BSL and S4 BSL classes including trying the shopping trolley fingerspelling dash and Mrs Kinsman's shopping list before she joined the different groups in their shopping trolley exercise. She saw the importance of playing games when she joined the S4 BSL class and again tried to outwit the group with her questions but without success.

Mrs Kinsman met with her to look at resources, materials and assessments currently used and also discussed possible options for future content and awards.



## Breaking News!..

This week we learned that the school has been awarded the top prize in the Homework Diary Award. Our entry centred on the integration of BSL in the life of the school. The press release read:

"The significant number of entries for this year's awards is a stunning reflection of the good work being done in schools across Scotland to include young people in the life and work of their school. The entries were of an exceptionally high quality and without exception were worthy of this award. My congratulations to all of those who submitted an entry. Choosing a winner was a quite humbling experience.

I am delighted to announce that the 2017 HDC Award will go to Dingwall Academy. Their bid centred around whole school strategies to engage all young people in the school in including hearing impaired youngsters into the Dingwall Learning Community. Youngsters from the school will visit the Conference in November 2018 to share with delegates how they have used the award to further enhance the existing good practice in Dingwall Academy."

# Ross County visit

Mrs Davidson's S1 English class are learning to be journalists. They visited Ross County Football Club this month to interview both the manager, Owen Coyle, and important mid fielder Jim O'Brien. They were treated to a real life press conference and were given the task of quizzing both men. They asked interesting questions and received some fascinating insights into the lives of a player and manager. After the session they were allowed on the football pitch. They are currently writing up their interviews – watch out for their articles on the school Facebook page.



## Chrome Books ...

Some parents have been asking what the Chrome Books will be used for. The Chrome Books will open up a wide range of different learning opportunities. Imagine if on the above visit the pupils all had access to a Chrome Book, they would have been able to record the interviews and start the write up straight away. Modern day journalists all make use of technology.

## Piping Success

Well done to Hamish Drennan (S5) who was the 17 & under Champion at the Inverness Piping Society Annual Competition on Saturday November 11<sup>th</sup>. Hamish won first prize in Piobaireachd, Strathspey & Reel and Slow Air.



## Taekwan Do

Rowan Nilssen 3N2 sat grading for Blackbelt in Taekwan Do. This was a major undertaking involving fitness test, theory test, thesis and a 6 hour practical grading in front of a panel of 4 black belts.

## Christmas Panto



Congratulations and good luck to Halla Eaglesham who will be taking part in the pantomime at Eden Court Theatre this Christmas.

## Kirsty Wilson

Congratulations to Kirsty Wilson S6 who has been chosen to attend the European Meeting of Young People with Albinism in Oslo next March

## Alladale Camping Weekend

Well done to the intrepid group of staff and senior pupils who braved difficult conditions during their two night stay on the Alladale Estate. Any outdoor activity in November can be difficult, but the cold and wet conditions made this trip particularly challenging.





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

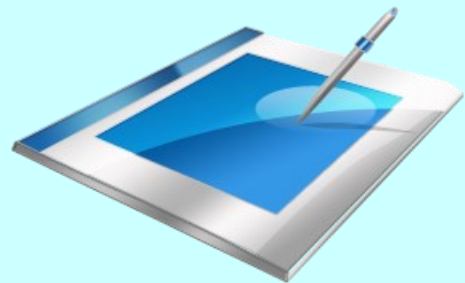
Something missing? Correction? Is there a feature you'd like to see? Get in touch!

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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**