



Dingwall Academy

News

Welcome to the **February** edition of Dingwall Academy News. We hope everyone had a restful February Break. Inside you'll find a wide range of news and information about the school and wider community. Enjoy!

The Hansel and Gretel Experience

Congratulations to Jessica Neilson, 1W1. Jessica successfully auditioned for the Scottish Ballet production of Hansel and Gretel at Eden Court. Jessica describes the experience -



In January, Scottish Ballet's production of Hansel and Gretel came to Eden Court and I was one of 14 children who successfully auditioned to play the part of school children kidnapped by an evil witch, pretending to be a kind teacher.

The witch persuades all the children to go with her by giving them lots and lots of sweets and then keeps them locked up in her gingerbread house to fatten up before she eats them. I appeared in the first scene when the witch lured the children away and in the last scene when Hansel and Gretel rescue us and push the witch in the oven. We had two weekends to rehearse before the show and one dress rehearsal on stage.

On the first night, I couldn't wait for the curtains to open and before I knew it, we were taking our bows on the last night. Hansel and Gretel was a great experience for me because I learned what it was like to be in a professional environment on stage. I also loved the experience because I met new people and made new friends. The buzz and excitement that you get before the curtains open is amazing and so is the thrill you get when you take your bow.

By Jessica Bice Neilson, 1W1



FEBRUARY 2014 EDITION

Dates for your diary:

S4 Contact Evening

Thursday 6th March
5:00-7.30

Inverness Music Festival

1-14th March

Scale Model Show

Saturday 15th March
10:00-4:00

Parent Council Meeting

Monday 17th March
7pm

Teenage Cancer Trust Talks

Thursday 20th March

Talent Show

Thursday 20th March
7pm

Teenage Cancer Trust Day

Friday 21st March

School Closes

Friday 4th April



STEM

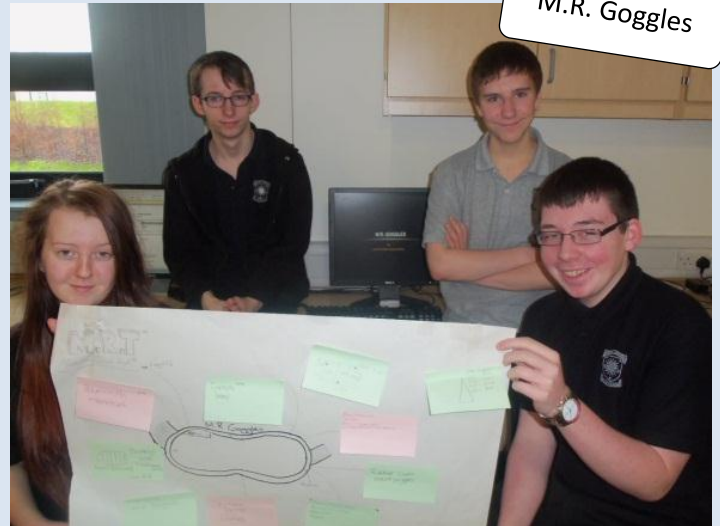
S3 Computing Science pupils have been working on an Emerging Technologies project in collaboration with the University of Aberdeen and STEM North of Scotland.

Last October pupils were told about the problems faced by mountain rescue teams in remote areas of the Scottish Highlands. They were tasked with creating an interface to help rescuers monitor casualty health on the slopes under extreme conditions. Help and advice was provided along the way by Dr Alasdair Mort and Dr Anne Schneider (research fellows at the University of Aberdeen's 'dot.rural' Digital Economy Hub, which is funded by the UK Research Councils) and Chris Bryson of Jorjin Technologies. The pupils worked in teams of four to brainstorm their ideas, investigating how devices would be programmed and finding out about all the components of an interface.

The pupils then had to present their prototypes to a panel of three judges in January. After much deliberation the judges decided on two winning teams.

On Tuesday 11th February, each member of the winning teams was presented with a £15 iTunes voucher by Dr Mort at a school assembly. The two winning teams were: '666 Emergency Rescue', who designed a tablet device, and 'M.R. Goggles', who designed an interface integrated into a pair of goggles.

Well done to all who took part in this project.



School Model Show



On Saturday 15th March the school will again host a Scale Model, Vintage Vehicle and Craft Show. The show last year was a tremendous success and this year it is been extended to include not only scale models of farms and railways but also dolls houses, vintage vehicles and a craft/hobby section. Refreshment will be provided by pupils taking part in the Outlook Expedition to Romania. The event will take place in the school hall from 10am to 4pm. Tickets at the door – all welcome.

RoWAN Event & Growing Hub



On Wednesday 12th February, we were proud to host an event that gave primary schools the chance to share all the good gardening and food waste reduction activities that they are doing in their schools.

It was also our chance to launch the *Growing Hub*. This is in response to gaining funding from the *Food for Thought* programme supported by Education Scotland, Scottish Government and Scottish Business in the Community. We will be working with RoWAN (Ross-shire Waste Action Network) and RHET (Royal Highland Education Trust) to encourage food growing and composting amongst schools and to provide training for interested teachers.

Six primary schools attended and their talks, which included things like growing produce and cooking soup for the whole school, cooking their own snacks to cut down on unnecessary wrapping, creating re-useable drinking bottles for all pupils and composting food waste in their school gardens. They enjoyed a tour of Dingwall Academy's garden – with a chance to turn the RIDAN composter! They were served a lunch before heading back to their schools.



Growing Hub – first training provided for teachers

On Friday 21st February, we had approximately thirty teachers from many Highland Primary Schools and Education Centres in school for a *Get Growing* training day. It was run jointly by RoWAN (Ross-shire Waste Action Network) and RHET (Royal Highland Education Trust). It included both indoor and outdoor activities along with a Q&A session in the afternoon with Miss Swallow. The teachers were very keen to get pupils growing in their own schools and shared many great ideas, hints and tips.



On March 20th as part of our annual programme of activities with the Teenage Cancer Trust charity, the school will welcome a visiting speaker to work with pupils and raise their awareness of common signs and symptoms of cancer.

This educational day will be followed by some fund-raising activities including a staff and pupil talent show on the evening of March 20th. On Friday the 21st of March we will hold our whole school event, 'Mad March Hair'. There will be more details of how pupils can get involved nearer the time.

Neknomination [sic]

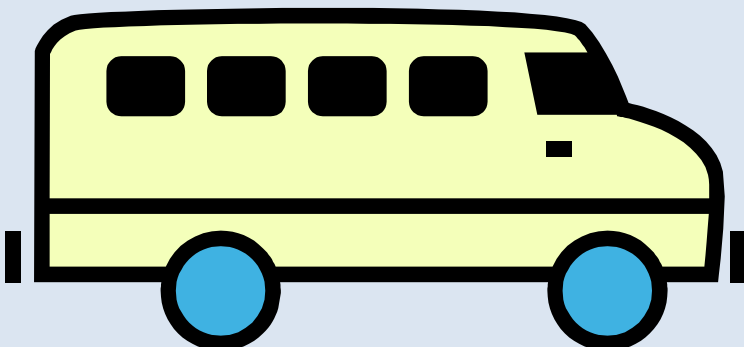
Parents will be aware of the terrible internet on-line drinking game *Neknomination*. Individuals are nominated to film themselves drinking alcohol, often in increasingly outrageous circumstances. We are aware that some pupils have been encouraged to take part in this dangerous activity and so all Dingwall Academy pupils have been encouraged to sign up to 'Dingwall Academy says **NO** to *Neknomination*'. Sign up sheets have been made available to pupils during this week and we have been delighted with the response.

Help! Minibus Drivers

The Parent Council are hoping to recruit some parent volunteers to help drive the school minibuses. It is increasingly difficult to find drivers in school as anyone who passed their test after 1st January 1997 is not eligible to drive the minibuses. Volunteers are only likely to be used a few times during a year.

If you would be interested in helping, please check that you have category D1 on your licence – anyone who passed after 1st January 1997 will not have this.

If you are interested or would like to find out more please contact Helen Cameron, Chair of the Parent Council via the school email address.



Congratulations to **Jordan Thomson**, selected for the U17 Caledonia Regional Rugby Squad. All the best for your rugby career, Jordan!

Whole School Notes & News



Staffing

Welcome back to Mrs Watson, Principal Teacher Pupil Support. Mrs Watson has been on maternity leave and we are delighted to welcome her back. Mrs Watson has responsibility for pupils in Fairburn.

Highlands and Islands Educational Trust 2014 Bursary

The HIE Trust University Entrance Bursary is available to pupils moving on to further education.

Application forms are available from the School office or our website www.dingwallacademy.com and should be submitted by 31st March 2014.

Lost Property

A large number of items have now been received into lost property. If you recognise any items on the list below then please contact the school office. Any items that remain uncollected will be donated to charity.

- 'Kylie' leather look bomber jacket, black age 13
- 'Quiz' black quilted jacket
- Black 'Urban Outfitters' shower proof jacket
- Two small black school hoodies
- Black Nike training top
- Navy and white stripe scarf
- Black school zip through hoody left in Miss Macleod's classroom
- Grey medium V-neck knitted jumper left in Miss Macleod's classroom
- Pink spotted lunch bag
- 'Red or Dead' purple zebra patterned glasses
- Black zip through school logo hoody, age 12-13 years, left in music some time ago
- Brown leather look jacket from Matalan, left in music some time ago
- Black 'Umbro' shower jacket, age 13 years, left in music some time ago
- Real Madrid football boot bag with Asics trainers
- Turquoise Highlife string bag with light blue towel and speedo goggles
- Lotto size 5 white and blue football
- Black adidas string bag with black, white and orange Nike 12-13 years dri-fit t-shirt
- New Balance size 10 trainers in Adidas kit bag with t-shirt and deodorant
- Paul Frank turquoise t-shirt and trainers
- Navy 'Adidas' vest top found in HFT



SQA News

All S3 and S4 pupils were recently issued with parental information produced by the Scottish Parent Council. Any parent who has not yet received this information should contact the school office.

The SQA exams are approaching and this term is very important as pupils work to complete assessments and to finish coursework. The SQA timetable exam timetable is available on the SQA website. While the dates of exams will not change the school can alter the start and finish times of exams. S4, S5 and S6 pupils will all be issued with personalised SQA timetables before Easter and these timetables will detail the exact exam times. Pupils will also be issued with letters explaining study leave. Study leave will be available to all S4, S5 and S6 pupils from Monday 28th April, the exact end of study leave will depend on the exams pupils are sitting. With the change to the exam structure this is likely to be the last year that exam leave will be granted to all pupils.

Appeals

The SQA have made significant changes to the appeals system. The school will only be able to appeal on behalf of a pupil if exceptional unplanned circumstances have affected the pupil's performance in the exam. Examples of exceptional circumstances may include family bereavement or serious illness. **Pupils will not be able to appeal solely on the basis that they underperformed on the day. This is a significant change and it is important the pupils realise that the previous 'safety net' of appeal is no longer an option.** The school will be able to submit a request post results to have a pupils paper re-marked. There will be a charge for this service but the SQA have advised that where this service is requested a pupil's marks may go down as well as up. Again, further information on the new results service will be issued to all parents..

Option Choices

Pupils have now started the process of considering their option choices for next session. With Curriculum for Excellence the structure has changed. Pupils follow a broad general education from S1 – S3 and then make final option choices as part of the new senior phase. The senior phase includes pupils in S4, S5 and S6. S2 pupils are asked to choose 9 subjects covering all the curriculum areas. In the senior phase pupils then narrow this choice down to 5 or 6 subjects.

S2: issued with option forms on 3rd March to be returned by 12th March

S3: issued with option forms on 3rd March to be returned by 12th March

S4: issued with option forms on 10th March to be returned by 21st March

S5: issued with option forms on 10th March to be returned by 21st March

All pupils are issued with option forms and information booklets. The option forms are also available on the school website.



Highland Young Musicians

A large number of Dingwall Academy pupils are taking part in the concert festival in Eden Court on 8th March. Tickets are available from Eden Court and the programme for the day is:

- 2.30 Opening Brass Fanfare
- 2.40 Highland Regional Youth Orchestra
- 3.40 Coisir G & Highland Youth Choir
- 4.40 Highland Youth Big Band
- 6.10 Highland Youth Strings
- 6.50 'Snas & Highland Youth Pipe Band
- 8.00 Highland Schools Wind Band

Susannah Mack is young
ambassador for R&NO
See her blog: -
[http://susannahmack.wor
dpress.com/](http://susannahmack.wordpress.com/)

Activity Days

The annual school Activity Days take place this year on Monday 30th June and Tuesday 1st July. A fabulous range of activities are available and pupils have now all been issued with activity day booklets. All S1 to S3 pupils are expected to take part. S4 – S6 pupils are also very welcome to take part. The booklet is also available on the website. Deposits and application forms should be returned during morning interval any time during the week commencing 3rd March. Some activities fill up very quickly and will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.



Back in the day...



1970s



Young Farmers 1975. Opera 1970. View of school from West End. Geography field trip 1973 (mini-bus). Children departing for trips to Europe: Dingwall train station and double decker. With thanks to G. Dolan.

Welcome to our newest feature page, where we invite you take a trip down memory lane... are you, or anyone you know, in these pictures? Have a picture you'd like to share?

Let us know! Make contact with your anecdotes and information via the school office.

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

- Sports Report
- Pupil Achievements
- New 'Back in the Day' photos
- And much more!

Something missing?

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

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Many thanks to English section
4.3 for their help in proofreading
and editing our newsletters.



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.*

Headteacher: Mrs K. Cormack



RESPECT

RESPONSIBILITY

HONESTY

DETERMINATION