

DINGWALL ACADEMY FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER 2013



Staffing

Welcome to Miss M Alexander Principal Teacher Pupil Support. Miss Alexander will be taking responsibility for all pupils in Brahan. Also joining the staff is Miss G Smith Temporary teacher RMPS. We are delighted to welcome them both to Dingwall Academy.

Congratulations also to Mr M Middleton who has been appointed to the Autism Base. Mr Middleton has been working in the school since the summer and we are delighted that he is now with us on a permanent basis.

Mrs V MacLennan has moved from Pupil Support to the Maths Department.

Calendar

19 th – 20 th February	Senior Business Dynamics course
21 st February	S3/4 Valentine Disco 7.00pm – 9.30pm
22 nd February	S5/6 Prelim Reports issued
26 th – 27 th February	Scottish Seafood Festival
28 th February	S5/S6 Contact Evening
1 st March	S2 Reports & Option forms issued
7 th March	S2 Parents Evening
13 th March	S2 option forms to be returned

Don't you have any homework tonight? S1 Parent Information Evening Tuesday 12th March 7pm

Homework in secondary school can be very different from the homework issued in primary schools as pupils are expected to start taking more responsibility for their own learning. To help parents support youngsters with their home study an information night will be held for the parents of **S1 pupils on Tuesday 12th March. The event will take place in the Multi-Purpose Hall starting at 7pm.** Parents will be given some general study advice and then some subject specific advice.

D & E Buses

Following the cancellation of all buses on Tuesday 5th February there have been a large number of complaints. D & E have given assurances that such action will only happen in severe conditions. Parents are reminded that in addition to the Highland Severe Weather Helpline D & E coaches has their own Facebook page. This will give families instant updates on buses. The address is <https://www.facebook.com/decoachesltd>. A link has also been created from the school website.

Red Nose Day

Friday 15th March is Red Nose Day. This will be a 'dress up' day in the Academy and pupils are asked to donate a minimum of £1 to wear alternate dress to school. There will also be a number of small fundraising activities on over lunchtime.

Highlands and Islands Educational Trust

The Highlands and Islands Educational Trust awards bursaries of up to £200 to pupils who are living in the Highland and Islands area and who are about to embark on courses of Higher or Further Education. Bursaries are awarded on academic merit. More information and application forms are available from Mr MacIntosh. Applications have to be submitted by March 31st.

Model Show

On Saturday 16th March the school will host a Farm & Construction Model Show. The event will take place in the school hall from 10am – 4pm. Adults £3 and under 14s free. The main organiser is Callum Morrison S3 and other pupils will also be involved with selling soup and baking throughout the day. The day has already attracted a great deal of interest and so please come along and support the event.

Cookery Demonstration

A cookery demonstration by Lady Claire Macdonald will take place in the hall at 7.30pm on Tuesday 26th February. The event has been organised by pupils involved in the World Challenge expedition to Malaysia and Borneo. Tickets priced £12.50 are available from the school.

SCOPE Litter Initiative

During the week beginning Monday 21st January Dingwall Academy took part in the SCOPE litter initiative. This brought together council, school and community volunteers to help encourage all pupils to dispose of litter responsibly. Where pupils put rubbish in a bin they were rewarded with a token – pupils were then asked to write their name on the token before posting it at the school collection point. The target for the week was to collect 1100 tokens and we are delighted to report that pupils broke through this target by Wednesday and by the end of the week had collected over 1700 tokens. As a result the school will receive £750 to use for environmental projects. Thank you to all who helped out during the week.

Cancer Research Collection

At the start of the month the school was approached to help the Black Isle Branch of Cancer Research UK with collections at Tesco and Ross County. A number of pupils volunteered to help – Sophie Horne, Cailean Welsh, Victoria Bartlett, Joanne Finlayson, Rebecca Fraser, Ashleigh Robertson, Katie Morrison, Lewis Lovell and Aaran Stevenson. They were very grateful and impressed with the attitude of the youngster and said

“It was so gratifying to know that the younger generation was so willing to help raise money for this worthy cause. These pupils are a great credit to both their parents and Dingwall Academy”

Well done and thank you to all involved.

Prefects

The annual Burns lunch is a highly anticipated event in Dingwall Academy. This year featured piper Eilidh Seaton, “Haggis Carrier” Jack Earith, Head Girl Lois Moyes addressing the Haggis, The Selkirk Grace by Sophie Horne, A Mans a Man by Cailean Welsh and Alex Beaton Garcia as Master of Ceremonies. Corona Celtica, the schools own ceilidh band entertained after the meal.

This year, prefects invited Faculty Heads and Mr Roxburgh the Chief Invigilator. The event was particularly well timed this year as it coincided with the end of the senior prelims and acted as a send-off for those going on the ski trip the next day.

Many thanks to Highland Catering Service for the quality of the food and the service and to the Morrisons Facilities staff for their help.

Andrew McCafferty S6

Rock Challenge

The Dingwall Academy Rock Challenge group of 2013 have been working incredibly hard since last June to put together their performance for this years event in Eden Court on Tuesday 19th February. The pupils have written, choreographed and made set, costumes and makeup for an 8 minute performance which is meant to increase awareness in drug and alcohol misuse. Tickets for the show at 6.30pm on Tuesday 19th February are available to purchase from Eden Court box office so if anyone would like to come along and show their support we would greatly appreciate it! Mrs Wood (PE)

TBI Potato Day

After last year’s successful event, Transition Black Isle are organising another Potato Day. DiGGers (Dingwall Academy Gardening Group) will be helping out and taking items for the seed and plant swap. Refreshments will be available so come along and enjoy some good food and locally grown produce whilst also stocking up on seed potatoes for the coming season. There will be at least sixty different varieties available – at two sessions (2pm and 3.30pm, finishing at 5pm). They will be 10p each so you can try as many different varieties as you like as well as firm favourites. The event takes place at North Kessock Village Hall On Saturday 2nd March (entry £1, under 16s and TBI members free). We hope to see you there!



Pupil Achievements

Mountain Bike Club

Congratulations to S6 pupil Ryan Fearne on passing British Cycling's Trail Cycle Leader Assessment. This is a nationally recognised leadership qualification and has involved a great amount of hard work and dedication from Ryan. He is almost certainly the youngest person to currently hold the award and is probably the youngest ever to achieve it. This will have a direct benefit to our mountain biking club here at the Academy as it will increase the scope of what we can do with the club and the numbers we can take out on trips. Well done Ryan!

Cross Country

Dingwall Academy dominated last week's Ross-shire School Cross Country Championships held in Alness. We won five out of six team categories: S1 Girls, S1 Boys, U15 Girls, U15 Boys, Over 15 Girls and Over 16 Boys.

Individual Events:- S1 Girls Erin Robinson – 2nd, S1 Boys Joe Arnaud – 1st, Scott Macdonald – 2nd, Over 15 Girls Lauren Fraser – 1st, Over 16 Boys Sean Chalmers – 1st. Congratulations to all who took part!

Music Success

Bruce Foster, a 6th year pupil at Dingwall Academy, has recently taken part in several college and youth orchestra auditions and has accepted a place at the Royal Welsh School of Music. He has also auditioned and gained places in the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland and the West of Scotland Youth Orchestra.

Congratulations to Eilidh Welsh who has also received a place in the National Youth Orchestra. Both pupils have enjoyed outstanding success, we wish them both well with their future musical careers.

The Guardian Schools Competition

CONGRATULATIONS TO Emily Pummell, Emma Reid and Annie Fraser for representing the school so well at the semi-finals of The Guardian Schools competition.

The Guardian and Zurich Municipal challenged all schools across the UK to develop an idea that would improve the quality of life for the school community, with the possibility of winning £5000. There were three categories- primary school, secondary school and special school. A brief overview of up to 500 words was submitted just prior to Christmas. In excess of 400 schools entered.

Our entry: **Transition through Sign** demonstrated the benefits pupils learning and sharing BSL can have on others starting their secondary education in Dingwall Academy through signing buddies, the fingerspelling challenge, sign boards and a short DVD made using BSL.

A week into the New Year got the pulses racing when Mrs Kinsman received a phone call from one of the organisers informing her that Dingwall Academy had made it through to the semi-finals which would be held in Newcastle at the end of the month. (the only Scottish secondary school to make it to the semi-finals.)

Three pupils: Emily Pummell (S3), Emma Reid (S3) and Annie Fraser (S5) were selected to represent the BSL class and the Deaf base. They were then tasked to make a PowerPoint presentation demonstrating their entry, present their idea to a Dragon's Den style panel of judges and answer unseen questions. The three judges were Guardians' head of the Education, Head of Marketing from Zurich Municipal and Anne Fine; the renowned author.

The girls had the confidence to stand up in front of an impressive audience and panel, present their presentation using a mixture of sign, speech and voice over skills and were unfazed by the questions answering them with clarity and ease. Mrs Kinsman returned to school and announced that the girls had been outstanding in their presentation and their willingness to try all new experiences had been impressive. (that long train journey had been well spent!)

The local Tyneside branch of the National Deaf Children's Society hosted Thursday evening: a very new experience for the girls to cope with regional variations in their sign language. They also met Tessa Padden: one of the deaf See Hear TV programme presenters. She said, it was really encouraging to see young people willing to use their sign language skills out in the community and they should be congratulated on their skills and positive attitudes.

Sadly, the girls were beaten to the London finals but the judges in their feedback declared 'Impressive delivery of presentation - questions handled well - and great to see the idea in action via the video clip. We liked the school's ambitions and actions to spread and share this impressive, trailblazing initiative. '



DINGWALL ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL NEEDS EASTER EGGS!!!

To raise funds for the school gardening initiative, we will hold an *EASTER EGG TOMBOLA* towards the end of term. We urgently seek donations of Easter Eggs, large and small.

Please can any eggs be handed in to the school office. Last date for donations will be Friday 15th March. Any parents willing to help, please contact Heather Thornton (07821859082)

Community News

Dingwall Youth Kafe (Next to bike shop on Tulloch Street)

The Kafe is open to all young people aged 11 to 18. It is a warm, fun and caring place where you can come along, meet your friends, play pool, darts, air hockey, watch DVDs, listen to music, play games, join in the quizzes, make pancakes etc. Entry is 50p. We also have outings to places like Rollerbowl, Cinema, Badaguish Outdoor Centre etc.

We are open 6.30pm to 9pm Monday, Wednesday and Thursday.

Starting from 18th March we are opening an extra evening especially for young people who have never been to the Kafe before. We will open every Tuesday 4pm to 6pm for 11 to 13 year olds, and 6.30pm to 9pm for 14 to 18 year olds. This is to give you the opportunity to come along with your friends and make it your night.

Staff are experienced Youth Workers committed to ensuring that the young people have a safe environment free from bullying, where they can be themselves. There are always at least 4 workers but usually 5 or 6 in attendance every evening.

If you want to know more please contact Lynn Roberts, Youth Work Leader on 01349 867771.

School and Community Food Waste Reduction Project *RU Up 4 It?*

RoWAN (Ross shire Waste Action Network) is working with Dingwall Academy and 9 other schools on the *RU Up 4 It?* food waste reduction project over the next three years. This exciting project is funded by the Climate Challenge Fund and aims to help us all reduce our food waste. Did you know the cost of avoidable food waste to the average Scottish family household is £550 per year and also the food we put out in our bins goes to landfill near Grangemouth, a round trip of 350 miles!

RU Up 4 It? will be offering a range of activities within the Dingwall area over the project period including, cooking, growing your own and composting. They will also be working closely with Dingwall Academy to help us to reduce food waste, develop our growing space and encourage healthy eating.

If you haven't already completed a household survey why not start your New Year by completing the survey in this newsletter and pledging to take up activities associated with cutting your food waste. By completing and returning the survey and pledge form you will gain green incentive points for the Academy which can be used for paying for activities or materials associated with the project. *eg visits, garden tools, fruit trees etc.*

Also if you complete and return the survey and pledge, you can pick up subsidised food waste reduction equipment to help you reduce your food waste (*see pledge form for details*). All the money collected for the food waste reduction equipment will go into the Academy's green incentive fund. Why not gain even more incentive points by agreeing to monitor what you put into your compost bin.

The more incentive points the greater the incentive fund will be for Dingwall Academy.

S1 Garden Dream

1W2 tutor group have been planning a new garden. We have applied for free fruit trees and hedge plants to start it off. Munro's sawmill have agreed to help with the cost of their "Woodbloxx" system and help us to build a seating and raised bed area. We now need to raise funds in order to make our dream garden a reality. "If we can build it, other pupils will be able to enjoy it and we can eat our lunch there and watch the birds and insects." To help us, please fill in the ROWAN survey at the end of this newsletter and consider buying a compost bin (£8 donation) or compost caddy for your kitchen (£3). If interested, complete the survey and we shall contact you to arrange a suitable time to collect them from the school office or Greenhouse shop in Dingwall. All money raised will help us with our garden so thank you in advance! Please email the completed survey to norman.houston@rowan.org.uk



Survey: please delete answers as appropriate – just leave the ones that apply to you:

1. How much FOOD WASTE (all food/drink that was once edible) does your household throw out?
a lot some a little none
2. Do you think your household throws away too much FOOD?
Yes – too much No – not too much Don't throw out any food
3. How much do you estimate that you spend on FOOD shopping per week? £
4. Do you regularly buy locally produced /grown food? a lot some a little none
5. Do you cook meals from leftovers? a lot some a little none
6. Does your household compost any FOOD WASTE? a lot some a little none
7. Do you grow your own fruit and veg? a lot some a little none
8. If you have a garden how much area do you estimate you devote to growing fruit and veg? _____ m²
9. Please keep any items that you would like advice or information on and delete the rest:
 - ☐ Reducing your food waste
 - ☐ Waste free cooking
 - ☐ Starting to compost
 - ☐ Growing fruit or veg
 - ☐ Any other food waste reduction - please type here:
1. Please keep any practical workshops you may be interested in and delete the rest:
 - ☐ Cooking to save money
 - ☐ Composting for beginners
 - ☐ Producing a waste free packed lunches
 - ☐ Developing a kitchen garden
 - ☐ Any other food waste reduction activity

By completing and returning this survey and the pledge below, you will gain green incentive scheme points for Dingwall Academy. Is there something new you can do to cut your food waste and reduce the household food bills? I Pledge to Reduce My Food Waste & Help the Environment:

(keep the ones that show what more you could do, delete the others)

Reduce food waste:

- ☐ / check food stocks & use by dates regularly
- ☐ /use leftovers
- ☐ / menu plan
- ☐ / serve smaller portions
- ☐ / make a shopping list
- ☐ / don't shop when hungry
- ☐ / keep the oldest foods at the front of the cupboard and fridge
- ☐ / take a note of what you throw out
- ☐ /other: _____
- ☐ / buy less
- ☐ /start to compost, or ☐ O compost more
- ☐ /cook more meals from left-overs
- ☐ /start to grow or ☐ O grow more fruit & vegetables
- ☐ /Buy more local food produce
- ☐ /other _____

Pledge and Collect (limited availability)

By pledging you will also be able to get hold of some useful aids to help you reduce food waste and cut carbon emissions. All these items are heavily subsidised and money collected will help us with our garden, so thank you in advance – keep those you would like to buy, delete the rest:

- Kitchen Canny Kit £3 ('tune-up` your kitchen and improve your shopping habits)
- Compost Bin £8 (only available if you do not already have a compost bin)
- Kitchen Caddy £3 (a filtered waste collection bin for your compostable kitchen waste)
- Kitchen Caddy FREE (if you agree to monitor your waste compost)

Please copy and paste both the survey and pledge into an email and send to norman.houston@rowan.org.uk Include your full name in the top of the email. Many thanks.