

DINGWALL ACADEMY MAY NEWSLETTER 2013



The monthly newsletter is now an established part of Dingwall Academy life. Parents are reminded that we are always keen to hear of pupil achievements – both in and out of school. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you would like something included in the newsletter.

The newsletter will now be edited each month by an English class. This month's newsletter was edited by Miss O'Boyle/Mr Green's English class (4.3).

Calendar

Monday 20 th May	Parent Council Meeting 7pm
29 th – 31 st May	Stompers Fyrish Walks
Wednesday 5 th June	New S5 pupils return from study leave
Monday 10 th June	New S6 pupils return from study leave
Wednesday 12 th June	School Prize Giving 7pm
25 th and 26 th June	Activity Days
28 th June	School closes at 12pm

Prize Giving

The Annual School Prize Giving takes place on Wednesday 12th June at 7pm in the Games Hall. The list of prize winners has now been pinned up at the front of the school. Our Guest Speaker this year is Mr Philip Blake and all parents are welcome to attend.

The annual award of school Dux is a highlight of the Prize Giving and this year the award will be presented to Frank Fraser 5N. The Proxime Accessit is awarded to Rhona Millar and Susannah Mack. Congratulations to all three on their outstanding academic success.

Staffing

Congratulations to Mr M Boardman who has been appointed PT Maths & Numeracy and Mr N Green who has been appointed PT English and Literacy. Congratulations also to Miss E Welsh on her recent appointment as History Teacher; Miss Welsh spent her probationary year at Dingwall Academy.

Leaving Procedure

Pupils who are leaving school at the end of this session should collect a form from the office after their final exam. Senior pupils who are returning are asked to return books and materials to teachers as soon as they can after exams. It is important that books are returned to allow courses to start for next year.

Questionnaire

Any parents who have still to return the parental questionnaire are asked to do so before the end of this month.

Evanton Pupils

Parents and Guardians of Evanton pupils may be interested to know that Stagecoach offer a significant cost reduction for pupils with the option of a Scholar season ticket. This ticket can only be used once daily during regular school hours but gives a reduction of approximately 75% in fares. These tickets can be bought direct from Farraline bus station, Inverness.

The Bells ...

We are currently trialling no bells between class periods. The bell now only rings at the start of the day and at the end of interval and lunchtime. Pupils and staff have commented on how this reduces pressure in corridors. It also asks pupils to take responsibility for ensuring that they move onto their next class in time. This will be reviewed at the end of study leave.

Leadership

Senior Pupils at Dingwall Academy have always been given the opportunity to develop their leadership skills through prefects, buddying etc. We are now working to offer younger pupils the opportunity to develop their leadership skills.

Parent Council Bake Sale

Parent Council together with the DiGGers gardening group are holding a Bake Sale at morning interval on Friday 7th June. Donation of baking will be welcome on the day and proceeds of the sale will go to the gardening group.

Super Citizen Scheme

Pupils in S2 have been invited to apply for the position of 'Super Citizens'. They are learning how to fill in an application form and have discussed why they feel they are responsible citizens. They have given up to date examples of when they are good role-models at school, home and in the wider community. The successful applicants will be given responsibilities during the P7-S1 transition. These duties will range from guiding P7 pupils around the school to helping out with friendship games in PSE classes. In addition to this a few of the smaller feeder primary schools will be invited in to the academy prior to the three day visit for an afternoon of informal chatting with our Super Citizens. We will provide them with juice and biscuits, some helpful advice and very warm welcome to Dingwall Academy.

S3 Prefects

S3 pupils (now S4) were given the opportunity to apply to be prefects during the study leave period. Pupils were asked to complete application forms that included a staff reference. The response to this was excellent with 100 pupils submitting applications. There were many more applications than places with the standard of application extremely high. 40 prefects have now received training and started their prefect duties.

Young Enterprise

On Thursday, 25th April, 6 S6 pupils took part in the annual Young Enterprise Scotland Awards at The Ironworks Venue in Inverness. As part of the ASDAN Award and Young Enterprise Scotland scheme, the group started their own business, Candy Candles where they sold sweet scented candles to the public and throughout the school. The group thoroughly enjoyed the experience and at the Awards ceremony they were presented with a "Highly Commended" award for their Marketing. Particular praise was given to the group's use of Social Media to promote their business.

Activity Days

Activity Days take place on Tuesday 25th and Wednesday 26th June. The lists showing activities pupils are involved in have been pinned up in school and pupils have met with the staff leading each activity. A small number of pupils have still to pay the final balance for activities and are asked to bring this to the office as soon as possible.

Alladale

The Alladale Challenge has been organised by the Alladale Estate to raise awareness about our natural heritage and the working of an estate. The owner of the Alladale Estate is trying to replant the Caledonian Forest which once covered large areas of Scotland; he is also reintroducing the wildlife that would have lived in the forest. While there the pupils taking part will help in the conservation efforts and will have the chance to see the animals being reintroduced and help the rangers in charge of their wellbeing. Pupils there will also take part in activities overseen by trained individuals to maintain their safety; it's not all work.

I was part of the group leaving on the first week of Monday 25th of April. Within the group we were split up into two teams, Team A and Team B. Our bags were loaded on to the van that would follow that coach we were taken to Alladale. While going to Alladale we met up with our team leaders and got the food that we would need for the week camping. When we got to the lodge the team split up and we organised the food and other supplies that we would need for the week. That day we simply familiarised ourselves with the area and set up our tents. The activities started the next day.

The activities that we took part in around the estate were gorge walking, some conservation work, wild camping and a safari run of the animals being reintroduced. The gorge walking activity saw us climbing up wet rocks, wading through water and near the end a small waterfall with the help of a safety rope and harness, our team leader and another trained individual were there as well to ensure our safety during the event. For the conservation work the two teams did different activities, Team A (my team) helped in the removal of the plastic guards from around the young trees that had been planted; I'm afraid I can't say for sure what Team B did but there was a lot of talk about herding cattle. The safari run took place after our conservation work and we were taken around the different animals being introduced, those animals I shall name here – the European elk, European bison, and wildcats of which they have around three of each. Throughout the week there was the constant activity of walking several kilometres in a single day and setting up tents. Our day of wild camping had us walk about 5km to a loch and setting up our tents, after the tents were set up it was decided who would cook as it was every day and later on we made a campfire from bits of wood we could find from the old forest which could be found next to the loch. Another camping location was the badger hide, a small room built in the side of a hill with a log burner and a table, and it was here at least that Team A told ghost stories, the best coming from Miss Tullis.

The weather while we were there although dreadful on the first day lightened up during the week and it was mostly dry and sunny while we were walking and setting up our tents although the wind picked up sometimes, the best nights were the ones spent warm and dry in your sleeping bag while the wind howled outside and the rain battered against your tent. The only day when the weather was really bad was the Thursday night when the wind was so powerful that it was actually blowing away some of the tents, although not far. The rain that night was also terrible coming down. The night though was not totally terrible as the team leaders and the other adults present made venison burgers and we had a barbeque. As for sleeping the boys all slept in one room of the lodge, the girls in the other the team reunited at the end of the week.

It was the perfect way to spend the week and I would like to thank Miss Tullis, Mr Lyall (the teachers from our academy on the trip), the people that kept us safe during the week, and most of all I would like to thank the owner of the Alladale Estate for allowing us to be there.

By David Robertson S4

S1 Rugby Tournament

Rugby Hits Dingwall Academy!

Since March John Mann, Ross Sutherland RFC rugby development coach, has been coaching a group of S1 and S2 boys on a Wednesday after school. This meant that Dingwall were able to enter the recent S1 and S2 rugby sevens tournaments held at the Ross Sutherlands ground in Invergordon.

With many of our pupils having just started rugby the tournament was designed to develop our players and give them an opportunity to play competitive matches. In the S2 tournament the boys were up against four other teams. Considering only 2 of the squad of 10 had played before the boys did tremendously well to come away with two wins against Invergordon and Golspie Barbarians. However, we also managed to score the most tries, five in total, against the eventual tournament winners Tain, who had many experienced rugby players in their ranks. All the boys played extremely well, however, a special mention goes out to Brandon MacPhee who was voted Dingwall's MVP for the quality and ferocity of his tackling. The next week it was the S1's turn to experience competitive rugby. Four of the boys had already played in the S2 tournament the week before, meaning they were slightly more experienced than the previous week. However, they were joined by three boys who had attended training the previous week for the first time! As the first game started it was clear that the Dingwall team were naturals and had so much pace, power and skill that Alness Academy simply couldn't match them. Having wrapped up their first win Dingwall played Tain RA who also struggled to keep our boys at bay. Many tries were run in with the boys really starting to gel as a team. The last game was against an experienced Fortrose Academy side that included four Highland RFC players. However, within 30 seconds the Dingwall boys showed their class with the first try. The game was tight after that but Dingwall stuck to the task and outscored Fortrose by five tries to two. This was a fantastic result and meant that Dingwall were presented with the MF Marine Shield. It was hard to pick out the MVP from an



outstanding group of players but Owen Fraser was picked for his tremendous work rate, pace and power. Well done to all boys involved in both tournaments. I hope to see Rugby build on this success and grow in Dingwall over the next session. Practice continues to take place for S1 and S2 boys on a Wednesday after school until 5pm. Any new players are most welcome to attend.

Cross Country and Athletics Round Up

This year has had some fantastic performances in Cross Country as was clear from last month's Scottish Schools Cross Country report. Below is a roundup of the other competitions Dingwall were involved in. The track and field athletics season is fast approaching and it is worth noting that there is an after school athletics club on a Tuesday after school until 5pm. All pupils are welcome regardless of age or ability.

We also have many athletics events coming up where pupils are able to compete against other schools in Ross-shire, the north and the whole of Scotland. The school sports will also be held on Friday the 21st June. We hope this will be a big occasion and invite all parents, family members and friends of the school along to watch and support the pupils.

Inter house Cross Country 2013

The inter house cross country championships was held in February this year. A cold day was in store for the runners but this did not stop 125 boys and girls from S1-S3 from competing to the best of their ability. All pupils that entered earned a point for their house with the most successful house team in each race winning 50pts, second place team 40pts, third place team 30pts, fourth place team 20pts down to 10pts for the fifth place team. All races were extremely keenly contested, although none more so than the S1 boys race where Scott MacDonald and Joe Arnaud vied all the way for the top spot, with Scott finally taking the win. This would continue to be a healthy rivalry that would continue throughout the Cross Country season.

Congratulations must go to all pupils who took part, particularly those who achieved a top three finish. A list of team and individual winners are listed below. **Athlete of the Day – Eilidh Gunn S3**

Dingwall sweeps the board at the Ross-Shire Schools Cross Country.....almost!!

Dingwall Academy travelled to the 2013 Ross-Shire Schools Cross Country Championships with a strong and enthusiastic team of 47 runners. Pupils had been selected off the back of their performances in the inter house schools, with many pupils getting the opportunity to compete for the first time. On what was another extremely cold day, which seems to be par for the course with cross country competitions, Dingwall Academy pupils set out with the aim of trying win the team competition for each age group. However, there was also the attraction of individual positions that were up for grabs and Dingwall Academy runners did not disappoint. Scott MacDonald and Joe Arnaud continued their rivalry in the first years boys race. This time Joe took the gold with Scott taking the silver just behind him. A special mention must go to the S1 boys team who along with Joe and Scott's 1st and 2nd race finishes they also took 4th, 5th and 6th in the race. There were also individual medals for Erin Robinson – S1 Girls Silver, Lauren Fraser – Senior Girls Gold and Sean Chalmers – Senior Boys Gold.

However, the team events as always are a little bit special as it takes a collective effort from all pupils running. Presentation time approached and as the Head of PE from Alness Academy continued to read out the results Dingwall couldn't stop winning. S1 boys (lowest score of the day), S1 Girls, U15 Boys, U15 girls and Senior girls team event wins all came Dingwall's way. However, the senior boys had a very close battle with Tain Royal Academy and we knew it was going to be close..... and it was!! Both teams finished on 33pts each and it went to a fourth runner count back. Unfortunately, Tain's fourth runner finished one place ahead of ours meaning Tain was awarded the win! The senior boys were of course disappointed but it didn't dampen what was a really fantastic day and an excellent achievement from the whole team – well done troops!! **Athlete of the Day – Joe Arnaud S2**

North Schools Cross Country Championships

After a successful Ross-Shire Schools Cross Country championship Dingwall runners were looking forward to challenging themselves at what would be a significantly higher level of competition. However, that did not stop Lauren Fraser showing her pure class by winning the over 15's girls race. This is an age group that she can compete in for another three years, making the win even more impressive. There were also great individual runs from Luke Shaw who won silver in the over 15's boys race, again an age group that he has another two years left in. Although, in the same race there was disappointment for our talented international runner, Sean Chalmers, who had to pull out of the race with a hamstring tweak. Erin Robinson was fourth in the S1 girls race and Joe Arnaud and Scott MacDonald again took a fantastic, one – two, in the S1 boys race.

In the team events there were again some excellent results. The S1 girls and U15 boys came second in their respective races with the senior girls picking up a creditable third place overall. However, once again it was those spritely S1 boys who stole all the headlines with a runaway win in the team event!! Along with Joe and and Scott's

1st and 2nd place, Tam Munro Whyte and Niall Maclelland also finished in 8th and 9th place respectively. Four pupils from the same school finishing in the top ten is a very rare occurrence and it was no surprise that the boys combined score of 20pts was the lowest overall score of the day by some margin – a magnificent achievement.

That just leaves to be said how impressed the PE staff have been with the pupils who have competed in the Cross Country competitions this year. Regardless of finishing position in the events we have found that every pupil who has travelled with the school has been well mannered, extremely well behaved and represented themselves and the school in an exemplary manner. **Athlete of the Day – Lauren Fraser S4**

Under 13 Football

Well done to the Under 13 Boys Football Team on reaching the North of Scotland Cup Final. Although they got beaten 5-3 by Millburn Academy in the final they boys can be very proud of their achievement particularly beating Fraserburgh 7-1 in the semi-final and representing the school proudly throughout. They have also won every game in the Under 13 Development League and have qualified for the national finals of the Cashback 7 a side Tournament to be played in Aberdeen on the 23rd of May. The most pleasing aspect is that there are regularly 28/29 boys attending training with the majority playing a part in different games. Well done and hopefully they can finish the season strongly.



St Clements Friendship Day

Last week a number of pupils were chosen to help out at the Marybank and St Clements friendship day. Our job was to get the equipment ready and supervise a station. When we were allocated a station we had to give the children challenges to complete to make it more difficult for them. I noticed that these different activities all brought the children together to work as a team. It

was a really good day for both staff and pupils.

By Adrian Moody

Dean Brannen 2T2

Congratulations to Dean Brannen 2T2. Dean has been selected to swim at the Special Olympics to be held in Bath next September. This is a tremendous achievement and comes after Dean won 5 Gold Medals at the Swim team Gala in Inverness. Dean is involved in fund raising for the event and will be raffling a signed Ross County Football in school next week. Tickets are priced £1.

Eco Schools Silver Award

The Go Green Group are delighted to announce that Dingwall Academy has achieved the Eco-Schools Silver Award. This year we have been focusing on litter, waste minimisation and school grounds and as a school we have made fantastic progress with all these issues. A huge thanks goes to Miss Swallow and her Diggers and Gardening groups. Next step is the Green Flag Award!

Cuairt nan Gàidheal Òga dhan Eilean Sgitheanach – Young Gaels trip to the Isle of Skye

The fifth annual Gaelic trip to the Isle of Skye took place on the week 13-18 May with thirteen pupils from second (now third) year taking part. Half had come up through the Gaelic medium primary system and were fluent and the others are learning Gaelic as a second language in secondary. Their activities included looking for dinosaur prints on the shore, visiting museums, playing sport with Portree High School pupils, canoeing, archery, mountain boarding and snake handling.



They were accompanied by Ms. Forsyth and Mr. MacIlleChiar who stated “We were both impressed by the good behaviour of the pupils and their willingness to take part not only in the fun activities but also the cooking and washing up. Also the learners made a real effort to practise the Gaelic they had learned in school in the Gàidhealtachd of Skye.”



There was a surprise for Maoilios Caimbeul (Myles Campbell) who met a local writer called Maoilios Caimbeul! There can't be too many of them about!

FÈIS DRÀMA DHEUGAIREAN - Gaelic Drama

Air an 22mh den Ghiblean 2013 ghabh Fèis Drama Dheugairean àite ann an Talla Cluiche One Touch ann an Eden Court. B' e Baile Dhubhthaich, Inbhir Nis agus Inbhir Pheofharain na trì buidhnean dràma a bha an sàs ann. Chaidh seo a chuir air dòigh airson dràma Gàidhlig a bhrosnachadh ann an sgoiltean. Thàinig cleasaiche Gàidhlig gu gach sgoil gach seachdainn airson na piosan dràma a chruthachadh. Air an latha thàinig na trì buidhnean còmhla airson a ruith thairis air na piosan teigneòlach agus air an dràma gu lèir. Chuir Club Drama Òigridh Inbhir Pheofharain pios dràma air dòigh leis an ainm Reulag/ Little Star. B' e Sarah Kate NicIllinnein (S4), Rachel Kellow (S4), Rosie Shepherd (S4), Josie Chaimbeul (S3), Sam McCourt (S3), agus Michael Bentley (S2) na sgoilearan a bha an sàs anns an drama.

Le Rachel Kellow A.S 4



On the 22nd of April a Gaelic youth drama festival was held in the One Touch Theatre in Eden Court. Three schools were involved in the event, Tain Royal Academy, Inverness Royal Academy and Dingwall Academy. The event was held as part of an initiative to promote Gaelic drama in schools and it is hoped there will be many more Gaelic drama events to come. Representing Dingwall Gaelic Drama group in a play they wrote themselves (Reulag -Little Star) were Sarah Kate MacLennan, Rosie Shepherd and Rachel Kellow in S4, Josie Campbell and Sam McCourt in S3 and last but definitely not least, Michael

Bentley in S2. By Rosie Shepherd S4

Thanks for reading! Class 4.3

